STAN & VINCE! SIMON BISLEY! GIMENEZ!
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What Attracts You ...©Vents D'Ouest
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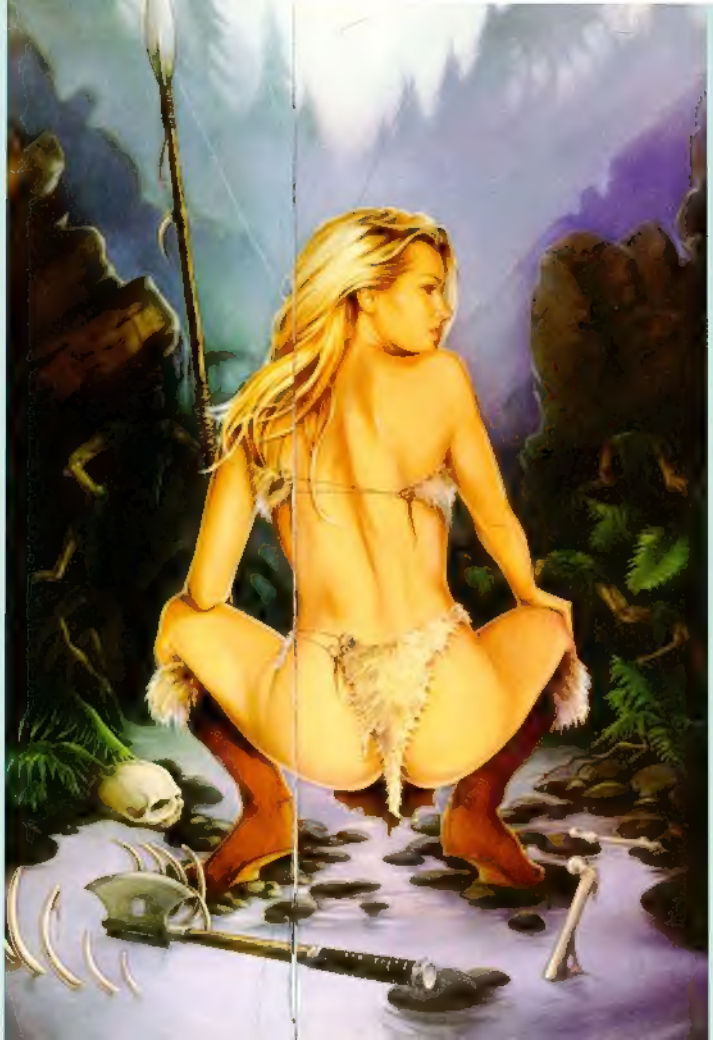

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◄Illustration by Jay Trembly
To see more of Trembly's work, check out his website at www.artoftrembly.com

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

BIG NEWS KIDS - - If you haven't found out already, the official www.HeavyMetal.com site has now become part of, and one of the super cool new channels on the MetaTVE.com site! We're so pumped over here- Right Angle Multimedia and Heavy Metal are finally going to get the chance to do it the way it should have been done all along! If you haven't been there yet, check it out. It has NEW content daily, all ORIGINAL and EXCLUSIVE content like Alan Grant and Simms Bisley's "SHITTHE DOG", member sections, a message board (where you can post notes that I'll answer personally), ORIGINAL ART for sale from the Heavy Metal 2000 film, DRUNKEN photos of SIMON and ME, TURTLES, TITS, and TONS, and TONS of other FREE STUFF! Stop what you're doing and go there - NOW! Or you can wait a while... up to you really, but check it out and let me know what you think.

What else is going on...Oh yeah, you know what seems really weird to me? By the time you read this, I'll be 40 years old! Not that big a deal to me- I guess that is why it feels so weird - - I don't feel any different than I did when I was 25!

Well... it does take me a little bit longer to recover from a night of hanging out with Bisley (if you know what I mean) but otherwise, just the same. We just celebrated Julie's 40th - - she's three months older than me - - and every one of the kids (Bisley's kids, like, "You're next Buddy! Hah! Hah!" So what - - I hope I feel the same as I do now in another ten years, but sometimes I do wonder what the world will be like then...

This is a pretty cool issue - - we have a couple of newcomers to the "Featured Graphic Novel" section, writer- They and artist- Beatrice Tillier contribute an excellent new adventure I just love. (we'll have a few more installments down the road for you as well)

My ol' buddy Lorenzo painted a cool new cover- but Howard found this beauty in Lorenzo's section of the Metatv.com site and we decided to use this one first, and we'll publish the other one later. We've gotten lots of great comments about Lorenzo's work so we put him in the Gallery section as well!

Stan and Vince, Karl Kofoed, Billy Martinez, Simon and I are all back with some fun stuff, as well as that crazy ass "Snake" by Bernet and Abuli. Juan Gimenez gives us the tenth installment of "Choose Your Game" (we'll have to do a collected version of that down the road), and Michael Turney, a pal of mine from the first "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" gives us his creation entitled, "Goody". I hope we get to see lots more of them.

As always we have a few more I didn't mention, but Howard and Deb limit the amount of space I can have or I would be here blabbing all day!

So, that is it for me this issue - - hope all is well with you, and I'll be back real soon!

All the best,

Kris Eastman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear H.M.,
I hope the next Heavy Metal movie won't be directed by Kevin Eastman but instead by a professional animator. If you've seen movies the likes of "Final Fantasy" and "Shrek" you'll realize why fans have expected to see something surpassing these excellent examples of storytelling. Please say you'll stay out of the making of the next movie. And please restore my faith in Heavy Metal.
Trek

Thanks for your note, and I know what you mean - - I actually wish I had more control over the film so that I wouldn't get so many letters like yours. I would love it if you or anyone else out there that has letters like these to forward them directly to the Director of the film, Michel Lemire or Executive Producer, Jacques Pettigrew at the following address: Cinegroup Animation, 1151 Alexandre De Seve, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2L 2T7. Everytime I forward hate mail they think I wrote it myself. If you have nice things to say - - tell my wife at jsfans@yahoo.com because she had to live through the hell of my working hard trying to get it right.

Dear H.M.,
I absolutely love Marini's art, and cheers to you for publishing his work. I hope you continue to publish "Gypsy" as the new issues become available, as your translations are better than the ones offered in the graphic novels by NBM. Please consider publishing some of his other work - - I'm dying to see "The Scorpion" or "Desert Star". He is undoubtedly one of the best artists working right now in any field and deserves more attention. Maybe even a magazine cover?
Red

Thanks and I totally agree - - I LOVE "Gypsy" and we'll be publishing the next adventure in our September 2002 issue! I look forward to publishing a lot more of his work in the future. Stay tuned!

Dear H.M.,
I've been reading Heavy Metal for many years now and it has remained a great surprise every other month. By the way, this month's issue KICKS DONKEY PUNCHING ASS! Keep up the great work! And to all you complainers out there whining about the good ol' days, just remember- the magazine breathes and changes just like we, ourselves do. It just may happen that you don't like the phase it's in, but that's okay. Maybe it will come around again to your taste. Change is good and is an important part of life, even if not always a welcome part!
Somewhere Far Away

I just loved your quote, "KICKS DONKEY PUNCHING ASS"! That is seriously funny/nutty and should be on a t-shirt. Maybe when I get around to publishing my other t-shirt quote, "Fridays mean there's only two more working days left until Monday!" I'll do yours as well. I'm always amazed at the range of cool stuff I'm able to publish in the magazine, and all the different comments I get each time I do. Always interesting.

Dear H.M.,
I just got a tape of "Toxie 4". I was glad to see Kevin and Julie in a fine piece of truly independent film. Keep up the good work. By the way, I love "Fistful Of Blood". Bisley is one of the greatest artists. Also love the writing by Kevin. Hopefully they will team up more often.
Vendetta

I think the whole Troma crew "RULES" and I was thrilled to be asked to be in one of their movies with my wife - - especially a "Toxie" one. I'm pretty sure that I have a complete set of all their films, and if you want to find out more about their movies, go to their website www.tromaville.com - - and poke around. Good stuff.

Dear H.M.,
I just finished reading the Summer 2001 Special. I have been a subscriber for quite some time and I've never found anything worth complaining about. But, after reading "Azurek Stories" by Stefano Cardoselli I was amazed at how you could put such a pile of crap in the middle of such a wonderful issue. Everything else fits and worked in a rhythm that helped my brain flow through the issue as only Heavy Metal can do. But, this particular story had no plot, no beginning, no end, no anything that would make a reader gave a rats ass about what's on those pages. Am I disappointed? A little bit. This magazine rocks beyond belief and this little poop stain won't keep me from reading. I just wanted to let you know.

Thanks for your comments - - and thanks for your dedication to us. As I mentioned above, I'm amazed at the range I can publish at times, and the different groups that have a difference of opinion of what I do. Always interesting. Keep the little "poop stain" comments coming - - helps me do my job better.

GALLERY

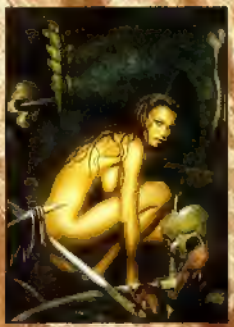
LORENZO SPERLONGA

Lorenzo Sperlonga was born in Rome in 1969 and at the age of 14, he attended the Italian Institute for Cinematography and Television.

At 17 his career was off and running as he began working for several Italian magazines and advertising agencies as an illustrator and graphic designer. He continued to grow and refine his style for nine years at "Lapis," an advertising agency in Rome, where he created scores of book covers, CD covers, posters, storyboards, and packaging as well as many advertising campaigns.

In 1994, "Skorpio," Italy's largest Comic and Magazine publisher, printed his first "Pin-Up," and Lorenzo decided this was his real calling. Fortunately so did "Skorpio" and the first one led to a series of many, many more. "Lanciostory," "Playboy," and "Penthouse," also start publishing his artwork at this time.

In 1995 he met Kevin Eastman for the first time in Los Angeles. Kevin looked over his portfolio and discussed the possibilities of his working in the American market, and five years later his first cover for Heavy Metal appeared on the newsstands.



Lorenzo lives in Los Angeles, and is now working with a variety of publishers in addition to Heavy Metal. They include "Avalanche Press", "Larry Flynt Publications," "NBM," "Fort Ross," "Linda Jones Enterprises," "Dreamstone" in Australia, "Eura" in Italy and many more.

To see more of his artwork log on *www.Metalfx.com* or contact him at *Spiderello@aol.com*

Songs From The Great Red Spot

Before the year 2000 few would have expected to find music — or life for that matter — on the planet Jupiter. Unlike Earth, the "King of Planets" is an immense seething ball of hydrogen, helium, and other elements called a gas giant. But deep under the water rich clouds of Jupiter's Great Red Spot is a zone of life. There, over time, the building blocks of life have collected and evolved, forming a floating reef larger than Earth and containing thousands of diverse life forms, even some that sing.

For centuries astronomers wondered why the size and structure of Jupiter's Great Red Spot didn't change over time, as did all other Jovian storms. The reason was a density difference, and the material that accounted for it became known as "Jupiter's Reef."

A manned null-gee probe, part of an ongoing research mission, is released from its tender to begin a descent into the Great Red Spot. Its team of a half dozen researchers will conduct new studies on the origins of life.

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Music of Other Worlds
Part 2

Two species of the Jovian hummer are shown on this page grazing on airborne creatures that glow when they sing. Swimming in the warm water rich gases, the hummer produces a low droning sound as he floats amid wispy shoals of air coral, whose mass comprises 90% of the total reef and provides a home for countless other creatures.

The song idea came when explorers called "reef divers" noticed the creature's sound stimulated tiny creatures to glow and others of his kind to hum along. Each one adds to the chorus and a glow spreads out though the reef. The sound and light show builds, like a musical crescendo, until a bolt of lightning shatters the air. Then silence and darkness return to the reef. But only for a short while. Soon, one of the hummers regains the courage and the appetite to begin singing for his supper, and the cycle begins again.

Next in the series:
The Volcanic Music of Mizar

©2002 Karl Kofoed

DOSSIER DOSSIER IS WRITTEN BY S.C. IGNACIO MARCH
IS AVAILABLE AT IGNACIOMARCH@YAHOO.NET

Scott Shaw's ODDBALL ODYSSEY

"When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."
– Hunter S. Thompson

Since the unpleasantness of 9/11, the tone of the public discourse has been notably somber, but now, it's time for some good old-fashioned wackiness. And I've found few things to steal the outand-out wackiness of Scott Shaw!'s Oddball Comics. Shaw!, a prolific and talented humor cartoonist and advertising and animation artist for nearly thirty years, is also an expert on the cosmic wackiness that is Oddball Comics. What is an Oddball Comic you may ask? To be truly odd, a comic book should feature a gorilla, a dinosaur, or Superman (or all three at once), or be some type of noncommercial "educational" with a bizarre title like "Dogwood Splits the Atom" or "Manny Pacifico, Tuna Fisherman." Cannon by Hitler or J. Edgar Hoover are good, too. Oddball Comics offer much accidental hilarity, and we're fortunate that we have Scott Shaw! around to reveal them in all their bizarre glory.

PS. Shaw's weekly Oddball Comics feature can be accessed online at: http://www.comicbookresources.com/columns/oddball/. Thanks to Scott and CBR publisher Josiah Weiland for their excellent assistance.

HM: What was the first Oddball Comics you collected?

SHAW! The first Oddball Comics I collected were the ones I found in the trash can behind the old Hollywood Pacific Theatre on Sunset Boulevard. I was about 10 years old and I was walking home from school when I saw a huge pile of comic books in the trash can. I dug through the pile and found a bunch of Dell Comics, Gold Key Comics, and Harvey Comics. I took them home and read them. I was hooked. I started collecting comics and reading them every day. I'd trade with my friends and buy comics at the local liquor store. I'd also get comics from my grandmother who would buy them for me at the supermarket. I was a comic book addict.

SHAW! Like most young boomer readers, I went through various phases of comic tastes. I started out looking at lots of animation- and comic strip-related stuff – and other so-called "kiddie" comics. (I even taught myself how to read with "you-s Then I became enthralled by the Mort Weisinger-edited Superman titles, which got some of the oddest comics ever published. They led to John Schwartz's work on the more sophisticated Golden Age superhero revamps and sci-fi anthologies. I think John was an absolute genius at concocting some of the greatest Oddball Comics of all time, his books' seductive cover scenes practically forced you to buy the comic just for an explanation! Although crude by comparison, those "pre-hero" Marvel monster comics (with goofy monikers like "Spurr," "Marvinex," and "Googilla") and early Marvel superhero comics had an incredibly shabby and homebrew feel (often got quite weird) and I loved and collected 'em with a passion. Soon after this time, underground "comix" finally came along, and they inspired me to do my own underground comix stories. But all along, no matter what my taste of the moment, I was always fascinated with the oddest stuff. For example, due to my obsession with the artists, I'd buy any comic with a dinosaur or a gorilla (usually a talking, purple one) on the cover (which apparently placed the comic book club at the category of DC's cover designers' target audience's level). Those factors also contributed to my early devotion to such decidedly Oddball series as The Way That Time Forgot" in DC's Star Spangled War Stories (featuring soldiers vs. dinosaurs in WWII), Dell's Gorgo, Monarch of Monster Isle, Archie's Tales, Celebrities Drive You Batty (a cartoon damned satire mag), and Charlton's George and Konga, both movie adaptations turned into series, often drawn by Steve Ditko.

HM: How did you start doing the Oddball Comics slide shows?

SHAW! Carl Bobrowitz Macek and I were both working for the American Comic Book Company in Los Angeles. Carl and I had recently co-written an article on "Esoteric Comics" for Robert Overstreet's Comic Book Price Guide and I guess that sparked my interest in presenting some of my collection to fellow fans. We called this stuff "Esoteric," but after Overstreet's Guide got carried away listing stuff like "injury to the eye motif" and "narcotics mentioned" to jack up the books' prices, I started referring to 'em as "Oddball." I performed the first of my slide shows at an early San Diego Comic-Con; I think it was probably in 1976 or 1977.

HM: In your search for Oddball Comics, have you ever encountered any examples of a "hidden picture within a picture" as described by Dr. Wertham?

SHAW! I often find "hidden" images and words in comics. For example, the cover of Strange Tomers #4 (an abstract piece by William Elgin) that includes a "hidden" penis with a woman's head at its tips, or that old issue of Marvel Super Heroes with the word "fuck" hidden in the grass behind John the Saint's walled cat. As Wertham claimed, there really is a lot to be discovered "by those who know how look."

HM: Do you have a category for unintended gay innuendoes, ala Giant-Sized Man-Thing Calling All Boys, etc.?

SHAW! I'd say that Popular Teenagers is at the top of that category's list, not for esoteric, but the fact that the comic concentrates by rote series featuring characters named "Jerri Gay" and "Butch Dykeman." (By the way, someone once assumed that I was gay because I found so many porno references in various Oddball Comics. Hey, as Sigmund Freud once said, "sometimes a cigar is just a cigar", but a cereal like that early 1970s issue of Supergirl, with her flipping a cannon shaped like a huge cock and balls at the reader, isn't exactly vague as to sexual messages!

HM: What's in the future for Oddball Comics?

SHAW! I've always wanted to do a book on series of books on Oddball Comics. In fact, I've got a book proposal up at DC Comics for just such a book, currently titled Scott Shaw!'s Oddball Comics, published by what used to be known as National Periodical Publications. I just need to find a publisher who believes in the project enough to amply prome the legal process of acquiring the necessary permissions from the various copyright holders of the material I'd be reprinting. In any event, I plan to keep producing my daily Oddball Comics Internet column for Comic Book Resources; it's a great way to keep lining up potential future books on Oddball Comics!

HM: Scott, let's shift gears for a moment. How did you get into animation?

SHAW! I almost started working in animation when I was offered an internship at Jay Ward Productions when they were producing George of the Jungle. Unfortunately, I was too young to move to Hollywood on my own. That happened a few years later, in 1975, when I decided to make a serious attempt to get hired by Hanna-Barbera. The direct approach didn't work, so I got a job a few miles down the street at the American Comic Book Company store in Studio City. My reasoning was outrageously sound: the shop had a lot of customers who were cartoonists for the studio. Before long I was writing and penciling material for H-B comics and my work on Yogi finally got me noticed by the studio's bosses. My first assignment was on WIL + Ote Now Feed and Ramsey Show in 1978, not a particularly great cartoon series, but since the Flintstones were the characters that got me interested in cartooning in the first place when I was a kid, it proved to be an irresistible offer. Since then, I've worked on dozens of animated TV series – and literally hundreds of Pebbles cereal commercials starring the Flintstones!

HM: Have you ever found yourself doing a comic book cartoon of a cartoon you'd worked on? Or vice versa?

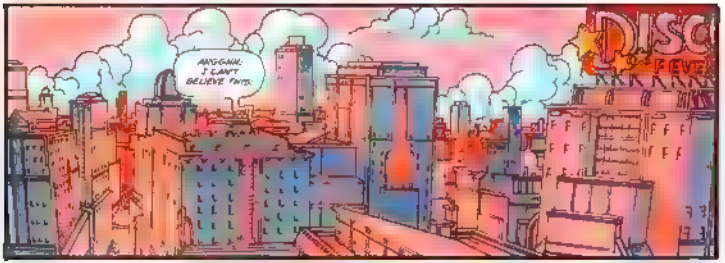
EXCUSE ME KIDS, BUSINESS IS OUT OF YOU-KIPS
SWALLOWS A DOSE, WELL, I'LL BE A BIG BITTER AND TURN ALL OF HIS VICTIMS BACK TO HUMAN FORM!
MASH!
OH, HERE'S ANOTHER BOTTLE OF HOUSE HORRORS, AFTER HE SWALLOWS A DOSE, WELL, I'LL BE A BIG BITTER AND TURN ALL OF HIS VICTIMS BACK TO HUMAN FORM!
WAIT, JUNIOR DON'T HIT A DOOR BUSINESS ANYWHERE!

Kurt Schaffenberger 1920-2002

Born in Germany on December 5, 1920, Kurt Schaffenberger immigrated to the United States in 1927. In 1942 Schaffenberger joined the Jack Binder shop, beginning a 40+-year art career. Schaffenberger's slick, realistic style graced comics for many companies. Career highlights included drawing Captain Marvel & Co. for Fawcett and DC and creating Magic Man and Nemesis for ACG. His 21 year stint on Lois Lane established the definitive look for the character. A mad-ed and gentlemanly fellow, Schaffenberger was well loved by comics luminaries. He passed away on January 24th due to complications from diabetes and heart dis-ease.

John Buscema (1927-2002)

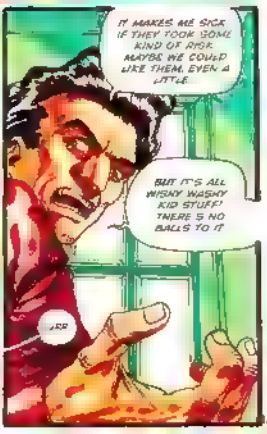
Career fetted comics titan John Buscema on January 10th, 2002, ending one of the most remarkable careers in comics. Born on December 19, in New York City, Buscema attended the High School of Music and Art and the Pratt Institute before beginning his career in the late 40's. He worked for many different com-panies through the 40's and 50's, notably Daill, Timely/Atlas and ACG. He left comics for such professions as bus mechanic to Marvel in 1966 at the behest of Stan Lee. A Marvel Buscema became a superstar. His work on *The Fantastic Four*, *the Avengers*, *Thor* and especially *Conan the Barbarian* made his the house style at Marvel after the departure of Jack Kirby. In addition to the thou-sands of pages of comics he penciled, Buscema also collaborated with Stan Lee on the book *How to Draw Comics the Marvel Way* and was an art teacher for many years.


DISCO FEVER
ANGGNN. I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.

HEY WALTER! JUST LOOK AT THIS! ISN'T IT DISGUSTING?
KLAK
ENTERTAINMENT
AAAHHH. WATCH IT YOU STUPID IDIOT! YOU'RE GONNA RUIN MY EXPERIMENT!
THE RESULT OF A YEAR OF EXHAUSTING RESEARCH
BOOM

WELL YEAH YOU'RE RIGHT IT'S WORLDLY, BUT LET ME TAKE A GOOD LOOK
ANOTHER THIRD-RATE BIMBO ACTRESS WHO'S MADE A NAME FOR HERSELF BY SHOWING HER TITS
SHE CALLS HERSELF SABRINA HOOTERS

OOOH.. OOHH.. HOLY SHIT!
OOH! OOHH!
LIFE'S TOO EASY FOR THESE CHICKS. THEY START OUT ON SOME RIPS 'N'TEAR AND SIX MONTHS LATER, BINGO! THEY'RE SMOKING THEIR BUSH IN "BUSTLER" MAGAZINE!
AND WHAM!! FAME, SCANDAL, CRISIS THE BALANCE
THE MAGIC FORMULA!


IT MAKES ME SICK IF THEY TOOK SOME KIND OF RISK. MAYBE WE COULD LIKE THEM, EVEN A LITTLE.
BUT IT'S ALL WISHY WASHY KID STUFF! THERE'S NO BALLS TO IT
...ER

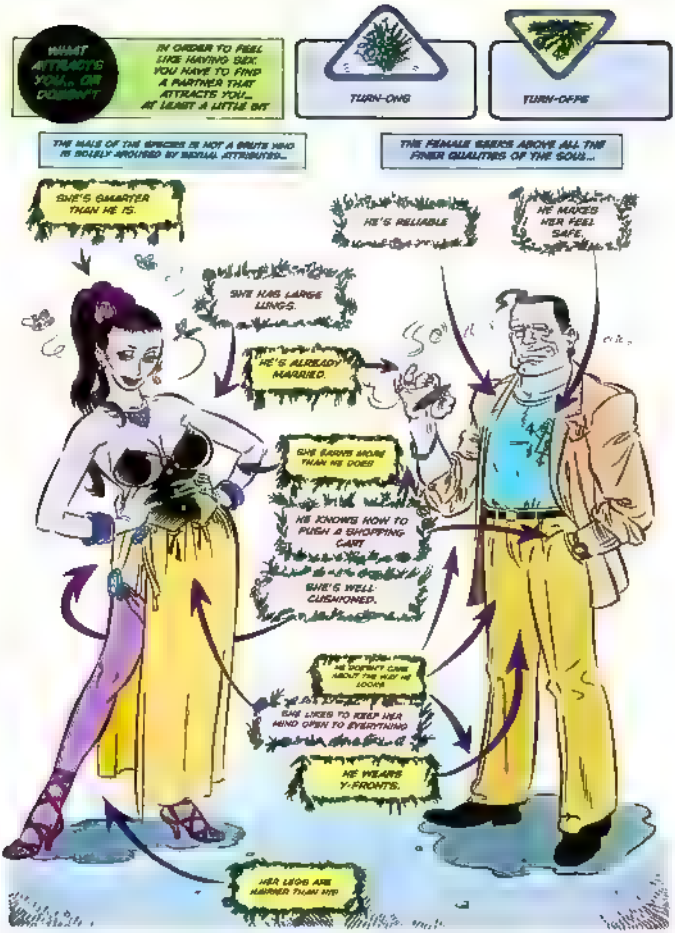
IT'S REALLY NOT FAIR. IF ONLY I COULD DO ANYTHING...
I'D SHOW THEM WHAT A REAL SCANDAL IS!!
DO ANY THING?
BUT OF COURSE WE CAN DO ANYTHING!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LOOK! THIS IS THE RESULT OF MY EXPERIMENT!
THE METABOLIC INDUCTION HELMET!!!
WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT?
WHAT?!!
IT'S A NEW TECHNOLOGY BASED ON VIRTUAL REALITY
YOU PUT IT ON. PLUG IT TO YOUR TV. THEN YOU IMAGINE SOMETHING... AND IT REALLY HAPPENS!!
YEAH. YOU KNOW "MILLIONAIRE" THE GAME SHOW WHERE YOU CAN WIN A FORTUNE
YEAH CURK
WELL. MY FAMILY'S ON IT TODAY.
AND THANKS TO MY NEW INVENTION I'M GONNA BE ABLE TO AMEN IMPROVE THEIR LUCK. HE. HE. HA.
GREAT! LET ME TRY IT ON
THEY'LL HIT THE JACKPOT!! THAT'S WHY I INVENTED THE HELMET
OKAY! I'M READY!
BE CAREFUL! THE HELMET WILL RECORD YOUR SLIGHTEST UNCONSCIOUS DESIRES. OKAY?
ALL RIGHT! PLUG IT IN!
DONE!
VZZIP

FIRST OF ALL... HERE'S AN EASY TARGET
THE ANNOUNCER!
TV
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN PLEASE WELCOME
ON THIS WEEK'S CULTURAL PROGRAM, WE WILL BE BRINGING YOU A SPECIAL REPORT ON... BIG HAIRY BALLS.
GRR
HA! HA! HA! IT WORKS! IT'S AMAZING!
HA. HA. HA! YOU IDIOT
LET'S TRY ANOTHER CHANNEL!
OKAY! "TV MALL" THAT SHOULD BE FUN
ALL RIGHT! LET'S SEE WHAT YOU GOT!!
AND FOR ONLY $39.99 YOU CAN GET THIS WONDERFUL
GRR
DILDO! GRR. DOUBLE DONG FOR THE DOUBLE DANGER. A REAL BUTT FILLER
YOU FUCKIN' IDIOT!
GRR..
AND THIS SMITH AND WESSON -H WHICH WILL ENABLE YOU TO WIPE OUT ALL THE VPS IN YOUR COMPANY
YEAH! HA! HA!
THE HELMET REALLY WORKS. LET'S TRY SOMETHING MORE CHALLENGING..
CAN YOU MAKE THIS FAMILY SITCOM INTERESTING?
LET'S SEE!

GO ON!
HMM... OH WHAT CAN I POSSIBLY DO TO KEEP BUSY WHILE I WAIT FOR MARK AND TONY TO COME BACK FROM THE BEACH? MAYBE I COULD PHONE BETTY
GRR..
HMM... I CAN STICK A BANANA UP MY CUNT ...!!
OOHHH... OHHH... AH WELL
LA LA LA
WOW!
SHIT! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR INVENTION?!!
AND A CARROT TOO, AND THIS BIG EGGPLANT
UHH... YEAH, WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE ANY CHICK WITHOUT HER CLOTHES ON
YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU CAN RULE THE WORLD WITH THAT!
BY THE TIME THEY CATCH UP WITH YOU YOU'LL BE THE MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE
LOOK AT THOSE TWO POLITICIANS.
WELL WE DON'T BELIEVE THAT A FEW BUDGETARY CUTS WILL RESULT IN ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE ECONOMY AND OTHER QUESTIONS"
GRR..
WHAT?! WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?!
SHUT UP FUCK FACE!
YOU PATHETIC APOLOGY FOR A SENATOR WHY DON'T YOU GO SCREW A RAT!

SLAP! TAKE THAT! YOU ASKED FOR IT!
SMFF
GULP!
BASTARD!
FAGGOT!
Vink
ALL I DID WAS ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL TENDENCIES!
SHIT!
THEY'RE REALLY GOING AT IT!
SO DO YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN?
YOU'VE CREATED THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE WORLD!!
IF YOU CONTROL TV, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MANIPULATE THREE GENERATIONS OF PASSIVE VIEWERS!
WHICH MEANS THAT.. YOU WILL HAVE ABSOLUTE POWER OVER THE MASSES!!
HUH? YOU THINK..
IT'S OBVIOUS! AND I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU!
SWITCH CHANNELS!! WE'RE GONNA PROVOKE THE GREATEST SCANDAL IN YEARS!
WE'RE GONNA PERVERT THE AVERAGE FAMILY AND THEIR DAMN "FAMILY VALUES"!
WOW THAT'S A MAJOR
LOOK AT THAT! A TV GAME SHOW! AND THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S ABOUT TO HIT THEM!
A GAME?
IT'S GONNA BE TOTAL CARNAGE!

LET'S START BY TAKING EVERYONE'S CLOTHES OFF!
S...BUT... WHAT TIME IS IT? YOU CAN'T...
AAAH! STOP!! IT'S "MILLIONAIRE"!
HUH? WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY?
HA! HA! HA! TAKE A LOOK AT THAT FAT BROAD NEXT TO THE IDIOT WITH A MUSTACHE..
STOP!! THAT'S MY MOM!!
MOM AND DAD!!
AND WHAM! MICROPHONE UP HER ASS! HA! HA! HA!
AAHHRR..
AAAAAH!
YAARH
I CAN'T HEAR YOU WITH THIS HELMET... WHAT DID YOU SAY?
BASTARD! YOU'VE DESTROYED MY FAN !!! YOU'VE ENRAGED ME! MOTHER YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR THIS!
AH! THERE YOU ARE. I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T FEELING WELL.
REVENGE!
ZAP
BOO HOO HOO... MY LIQUEFIER RAY WORKS PERFECTLY!.. AND YET MY LIFE HAS BEEN RUINED!!
SUCH A SENSITIVE YOUNG MAN
NEVER AGAIN WILL I BE ABLE TO HANDLE A TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICE.
IT'S THE END!
OR MAYBE I COULD DO SOMETHING SIMPLE LIKE MAGNETICALLY CONTROL THE BALL ON A ROULETTE TABLE
I DON'T KNOW.
DZZT!

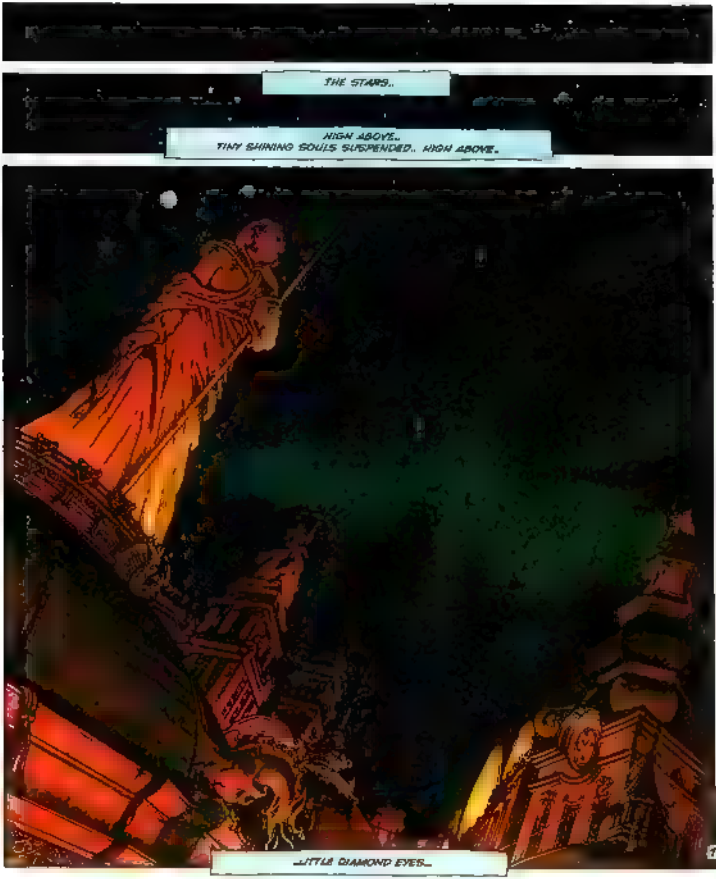

WHAT ATTRACTS YOU... OR DOESN'T
IN ORDER TO FEEL LIKE HAVING SEX, YOU HAVE TO FIND A PARTNER THAT ATTRACTS YOU... AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT
TURN-ONS
TURN-OFFS
THE MALE OF THE SPECIES IS NOT A BRUTE WHO IS SOLELY AROUSED BY SEXUAL ATTRIBUTES...
THE FEMALE RANKS ABOVE ALL THE FINER QUALITIES OF THE SOUL...
SHE'S SMARTER THAN HE IS.
HE'S RELIABLE
HE MAKES HER FEEL SAFE.
SHE HAS LARGE LUNGS.
HE'S ALREADY MARRIED.
SHE EARNS MORE THAN HE DOES!
HE KNOWS HOW TO PUSH A SHOPPING CART
SHE'S WELL CUSHIONED.
HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE HAT HE LOOKS
SHE LIKES TO KEEP HER MIND OPEN TO EVERYTHING
HE WEARS Y-FRONTS.
HER LEGS ARE HAIRIER THAN HIS

THE EROGENOUS ZONES
...SOME OF WHICH MUST BE HANDLED WITH CARE
THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES IS A SOLID MASS OF EROGENOUS ZONES.
FROM MY EARS TO MY TOES EVERYTHING FEELS SO GREAT!
AND IN BETWEEN, WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?
WHAT TO DO WITH EARS?
OUCH! MY EROGENOUS ZONE!
HOW ABOUT WHISPERING MURMURING, LICKING AND NIBBLING...
WHAT TO DO WITH TOES?
AAAH! THAT FEELS SO GOOD! YES!!
YOU CAN ALSO TWIDDLE YOUR THUMBS OR PLAY CARDS
BUT THE MALE'S EROGENOUS ZONES ARE LIMITED TO THE EROGENOUS ZONE.
MY TOES DON'T FEEL THAT SPECIAL.
DO YOU WANT ME TO SUCK YOUR TOES?
WHY DON'T FEMALES HAVE A PENIS? YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT THIS IS THE MAIN DIFFERENCE...
BECAUSE THEY USE THEIR BRAINS TO THINK!
ACTUALLY, MEN DO HAVE OTHER EROGENOUS ZONES... BUT YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO AROUSE THEM...
BOOB TUBE ZONE.
AREA THROUGH WHICH BEER IS INHALED.
AREA WHERE BEER IS STORED.
AREA THROUGH WHICH BEER IS EVACUATED.
AREA OF FLATULENCE.

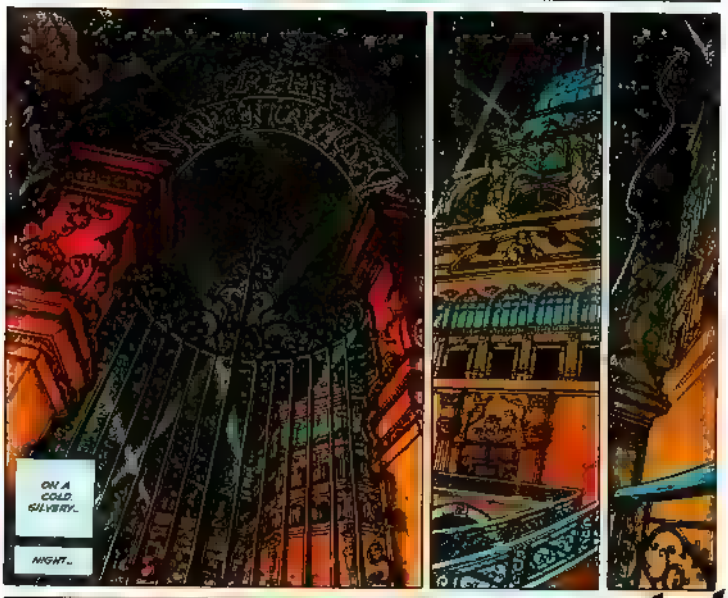
CHILD STORY
by Jdan Lis
GLUG
ZIP!

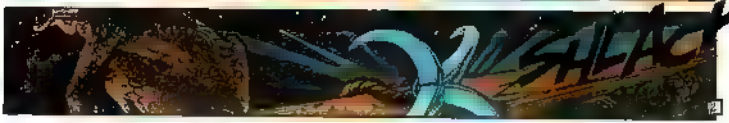
CHILD STORY
BY dan Lish
RUMBLE
BANG!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

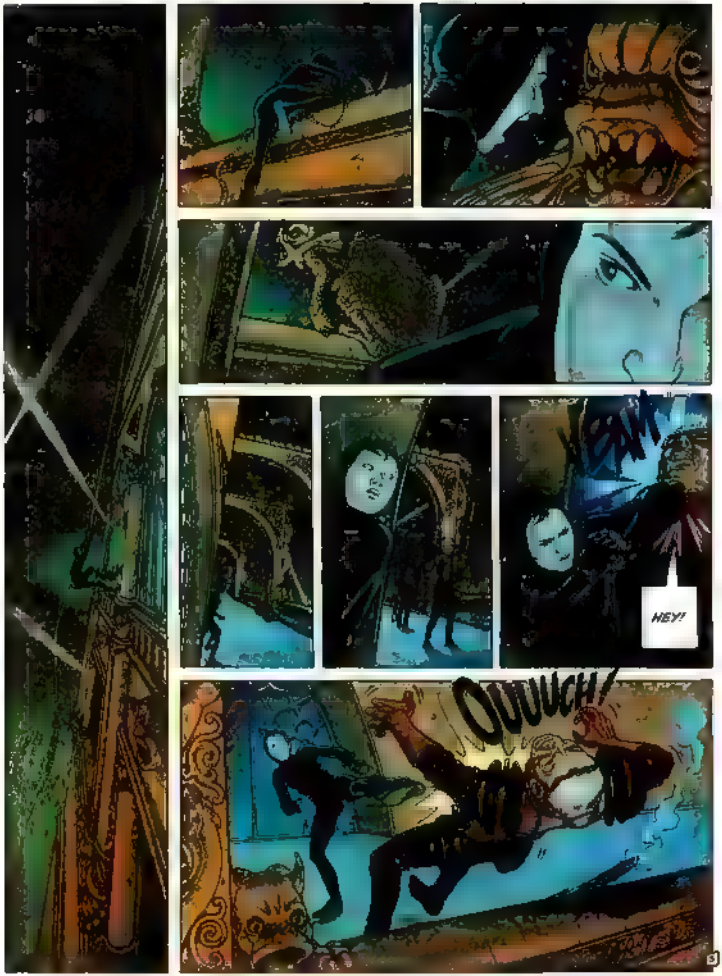
CHILD STORY
BY DAN DISH
PUNT
AAAA


THE STARS..
HIGH ABOVE..
TINY SHINING SOULS SUSPENDED.. HIGH ABOVE.
..LITTLE DIAMOND EYES..

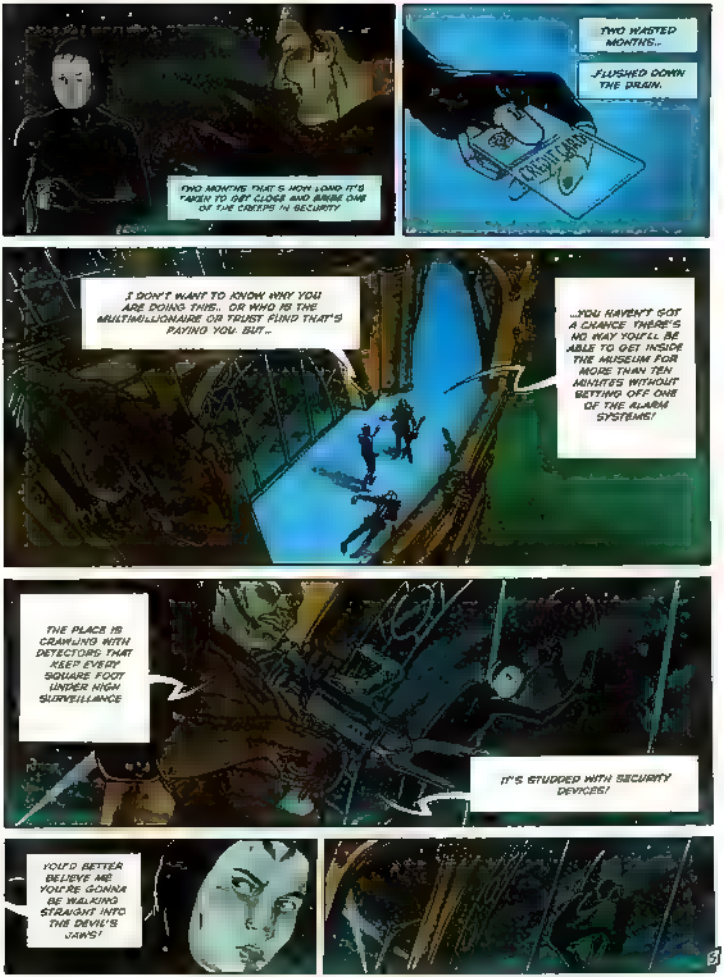
DECEMBER 1ST, 1020 IN THE ERA OF GRACE.
CARLOTTA. A TENTACULAR NEO-BAROQUE MEGALOPOLIS BUILT ON THE SCRAPS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD... SOMEWHERE IN THE HEART OF THE MUSEUM-COMPLEX


ON A COLD, SILVERY...
NIGHT...


SHLACK


HEY!
OUUUCH!

HEY! EAST WING PATROL!
ALERT! INTRUDER!!
HANS! D'YOU HEAR ME? IT'S AN ALERT!!!
WARN THE P...
SHAA
HANS HERE... MESSAGE RECEIVED... NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY.
TWO MONTHS


TWO MONTHS THAT'S HOW LONG IT'S TAKEN TO GET CLOSE AND BRIBE ONE OF THE GUARDS IN SECURITY
TWO WASTED MONTHS...
FLUSHED DOWN THE DRAIN.
CREDIT CARD
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHY YOU ARE DOING THIS. OR WHO IS THE MULTIMILLIONAIRE OR TRUST FUND THAT'S PAYING YOU. BUT...
...YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE. THERE'S NO WAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET INSIDE THE MUSEUM FOR MORE THAN TEN MINUTES WITHOUT SETTING OFF ONE OF THE ALARM SYSTEMS!
THE PLACE IS CRAWLING WITH DETECTORS THAT KEEP EVERY SQUARE FOOT UNDER HIGH SURVEILLANCE
IT'S STUDDED WITH SECURITY DEVICES!
YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE ME! YOU'RE GONNA BE WALKING STRAIGHT INTO THE DEVIL'S JAWS!

SILENCE.
ABSOLUTE ICY SILENCE. A DROP OF SWEAT IS TRICKLING DOWN MY FACE. MUSTN'T TURN BACK.
CARRY ON. QUICKEN MY PACE.
GOLD-EMBEDDED STATUES... WREATHED IN CRIMSON OR GOSSAMER...
...WHITE SATIN ELISABETHAN DRESSES AND TUNICS...
ANTIQUE FURNITURE CARVED WITH ROSETTES... BLACK MARBLE FLECKED WITH SILVER BEADS...
...PRICELESS OLD STUFF...
BUT I HAVEN'T COME HERE FOR...
...ANY OF
THESE THINGS

HMM.
LASER BEAMS.
SHORT?
EVERYWHERE.. AS EXPECTED..
ONLY TWO WEEKS TO REHEARSE THIS ACT..
PERHAPS A BIT..

AND NOW..
..AT CLOSE REACH..
I CAN FEEL
QUIVERING
OF..
FAIRIES...
IT'S... IT'S.. YOU... MY SWEET FAIRY! IT'S REALLY YOU!

...FOR SO LONG... FOR SO MANY
...CENTURIES!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU...
AND NOW...
OH, BY THE GNOMES, THE ELVES AND THE SPRITES, I'VE FOUND YOU!

UNFINISHED ROBOT FAIRY [redacted] WITH PORCELAIN FEATURES. 30 YEARS BEFORE THE ERA OF GRACE.
Woooo
INTRUDER INSIDE! ALERT! ALERT!
SURVEILLANCE TEAMS! EMERGENCY! ON THE DOUBLE!

THEY GOT YOU! WHAT DID I TELL YOU..
ALERT SQUADS STAY ON THE OFFENSIVE! THERE MAY BE MORE OF THEM!
INTRUDERS' NAMES AND OBJECTIVES UNDETERMINED!
SHLAAK
I RECOGNIZE THE MEN'S CRIES! THEIR FURY... AS DEADLY!
NOTHING WILL
STOP THEM!
DO YOU HEAR THEM? THEY'RE COMING! PLEASE, SWEET FAIRY! LOOK AT ME!
LOOK AT ME!
LOCATION: LEVEL 3. VISUAL CONFIRMATION: HOW MANY INTRUDERS ARE INSIDE? I WANT MORE INFORMATION, I REPEAT ..
INTRUDERS' ENTRY POINT FOUND!
I KNOW YOU! SAW MY FACE! RECOGNIZE IT! IT'S ME, JAM!
JAM FROM THE OLD DAYS!
I BEG YOU..
PLEASE, SWEET FAIRY! ANSWER ME
ONE WORD IS ALL I NEED!

CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK
I'VE WAITED SO LONG FOR THIS MOMENT AND WISHED SO HARD FOR IT! PLEASE DO THIS FOR ME!
JUST LOOK AT ME! JUST A GLANCE!
I'LL RETURN DAY AND NIGHT IF I HAVE TO..
CLUNK CL
I'LL KEEP COMING BACK... AND YOU'LL RECOGNIZE ME! I PROMISE YOU WILL!
OH.. YES..
I..
PROMISE
CLUNK
POOF
YOU WILL..

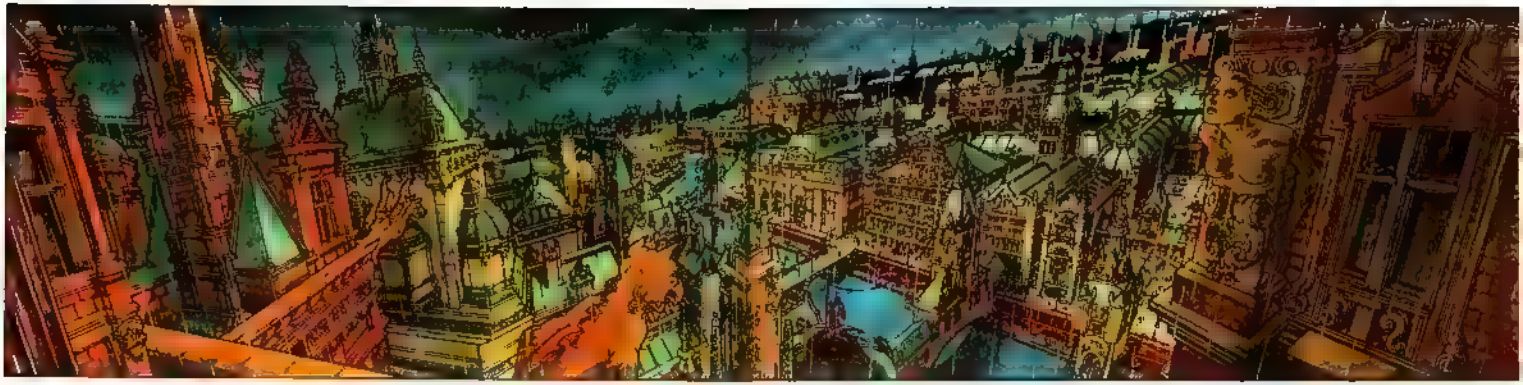
FRAAS
THERE!
FIRST INTRUDER FOUND!
BRING HIM DOWN!! DAMN IT! HE'S RIGHT THERE! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! SHOOT!!!
COOL IT, HANS! COOL IT!! I CAN'T MISS FROM HERE!
45

FRASH
GOT HIM! STOPPED HIM DEAD!!
SO WHY DOESN'T HE DROP? SHIT! WHAT'S GOING ON?
DAMN IT CAN SEE HIM IN MY THERMAL SCOPE. SHOULD I WHACK HIM OR
WAIT! DON'T MOVE! LOOK!

MY FAIRY! YOU LOOKED AT ME! I KNOW YOU DID! AND YOU SAW ME!!
THAT LOOK...
...I'LL TAKE IT WITH ME!!
GET UP THERE!
USELESS LOUTS! CHECK ALL THE CORRIDORS! HE'S PROBABLY NOT ALONE!
AND GET HIM!
HURRY! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
BULLETS...
...HAILING ALL AROUND...
...CUTTING THROUGH THE AIR...
MUSTN'T THINK ABOUT IT

MUST ESCAPE...
...ESCAPE
THE RAIN BUFFETS MY FACE
IT ALWAYS RAINS RIGHT BEFORE DAYBREAK
THE REST IS VERY
...EASY.
REQUIRING AGILITY... TO GET AWAY
...LEAVING THEM FAR

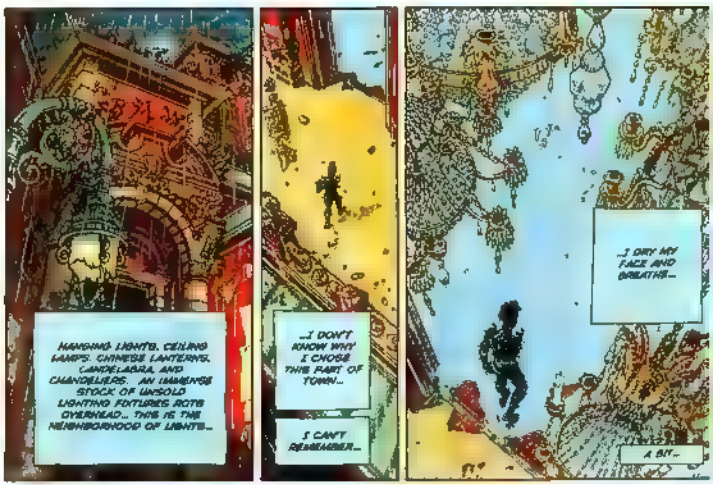
BEHIND
NO! LOOK!
THE HIGH-VOLTAGE CABLES. HE'S GOING TO ELECTROCUTE HIMSELF!!
IT'S ALL OVER FOR THAT ONE!
HEY! SHIT! HE'S GETTING UP!
DAMN! LOOKS LIKE HE'S ENJOYING IT! HE'S ON FIRE AND HE LIKES IT!
I'LL...
...TAKE
YOUR GLANCE..
..WITH
ME...



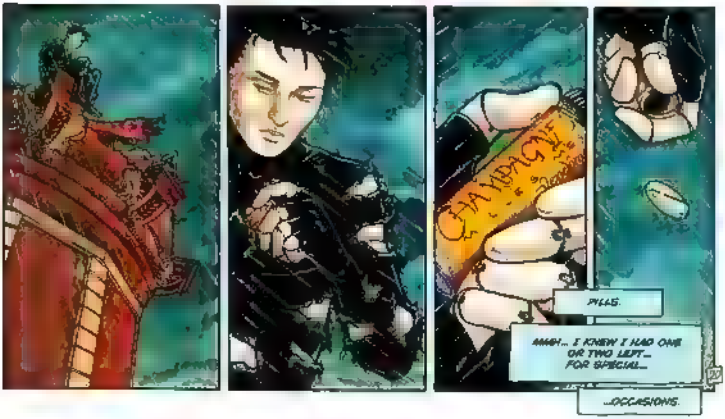
THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT HAS SLOWLY GIVEN WAY TO A DULL WHITE LIGHT. PUSHING BACK THE BLACK VELVET COVERS OF NIGHT FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD KNOWN AS CANTLEFF. I FOLLOW THE MAIN BOULEVARDS OF CARLOTTA. WALKING ALONE FOR A LONG TIME. A LONG TIME. IT DOESN'T STOP RAINING. THE INSISTENT DRIZZLE SEEMS TO STICK TO MY SKIN. THEN HIS FACE DISTORTED WITH HATRED. A MAN YELLS, "DEATH TO THE GOVERNOR! DEATH!" ANOTHER MAN ECHOES HIM. THEN ANOTHER. THE STENCH OF HUNGER AND SWEAT RISES FROM THEM.

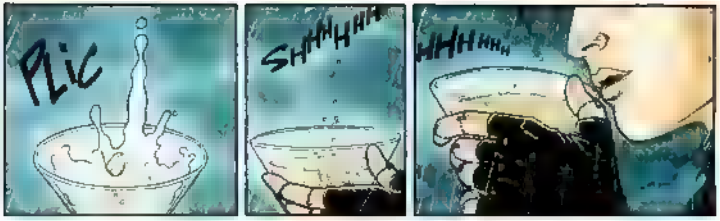
I CONTINUE..
..ON MY WAY
NARRO-CHINA. CARLOTTA'S LOWER DEPTHS. A NEIGHBORHOOD OF ILL REPUTE THAT IS "HOME" TO THOUSANDS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE.
THE GUTTERS ARE OVERFLOWING. A CHILD CRIES.

..A GRIMACING, BLEEDING SCRAP OF LIFE VANISHES ROUND A CORNER... NOW ONLY THE BLOOD REMAINS. A BIT OF BLOOD IN THE RAIN.. I GET TO THE PURPLE WILSON, THE HOTEL WITH THE RUNDOWN FACADE. I GO IN AND CLIMB UP THE STAIRS. PAST THE BROKEN NEON LIGHTS. THE CRIES FROM THE STREET RECEDE. AND THE NOISES BECOME FAMILIAR AGAIN... ALMOST FAMILIAR... THIS IS WHERE I'VE SETTLED DOWN... LIKE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS. A NAMELESS FACE AMONG THE NAMELESS...

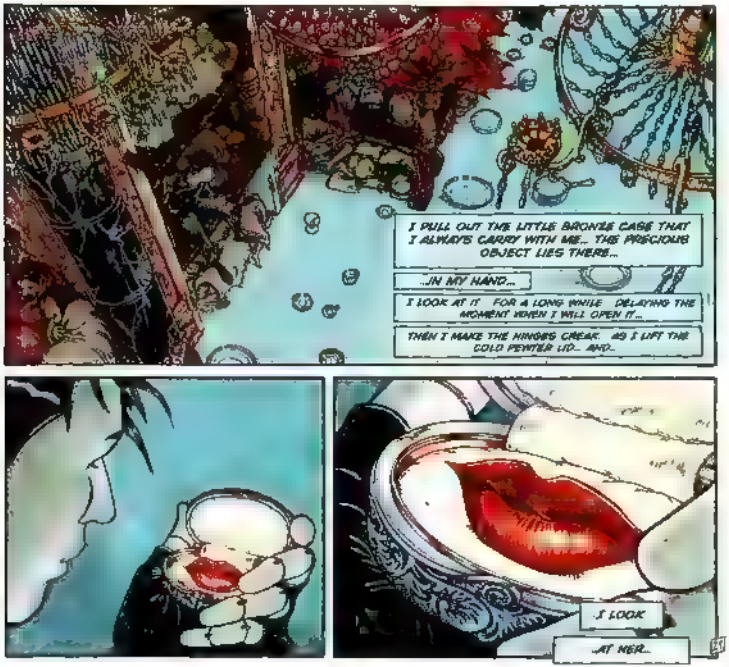

HANGING LIGHTS, CEILING LAMPS, CHINESE LANTERNS, CANDELABRA, AND CHANDELIERS. AN IMMENSE STOCK OF UNSOLD LIGHTING FIXTURES ROTS OVERHEAD... THIS IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF LIGHTS...
..I DON'T KNOW WHY I CHOSE THIS PART OF TOWN...
I CAN'T REMEMBER...
..I DRY MY FACE AND BREATHE...
A BIT..

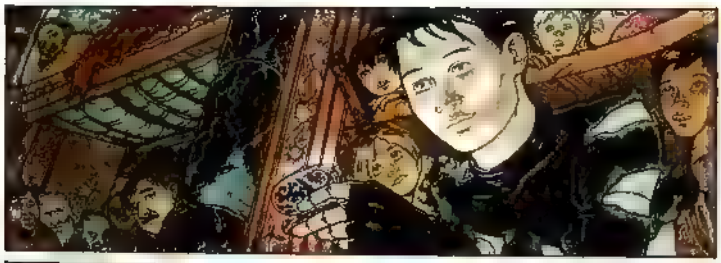
FROM HERE I CAN SEE ALL OF CARLOTTA... I CAN LET TIME GO BY... I CAN STAY HERE ALL DAY. WITHOUT MOVING... THINKING OF HER... AND OF NOTHING ELSE.





TODAY IS A SPECIAL DAY. THAT CALLS FOR A CELEBRATION! CHAMPAGNE FROM 937 IN THE ERA OF GRACE. IT SEEMS TO BURN INSIDE AS I DRINK IT. AND THEN... AND THEN, THE DARKEST NIGHT COVERS EVERYTHING AGAIN. A FEW STREAKS OF LIGHTNING FAR AWAY... AND SOME DISTANT RUMBLINGS... I WITHDRAW INTO MYSELF... EVERYONE AROUND ME HAS FALLEN ASLEEP... I CAN HEAR THEIR SLOW, REGULAR BREATHING. BUT I KNOW THAT SOME OF THEM ARE ONLY PRETENDING TO SLEEP...


I PULL OUT THE LITTLE BRONZE CASE THAT I ALWAYS CARRY WITH ME... THE PRECIOUS OBJECT LIES THERE...
...IN MY HAND...
I LOOK AT IT. FOR A LONG WHILE. DELAYING THE MOMENT WHEN I WILL OPEN IT...
THEN I MAKE THE HINGES CREAK. AS I LIFT THE COLD PEWTER LID... AND...
I LOOK
...AT HER...

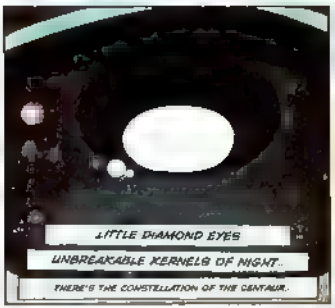


AND SO... IN THIS LEAKING, RAIN-DRENCHED, COLD AND DRAFTY ATTIC APARTMENT UNDER THE SOMBER CHANDELIERS THAT DRIP WITH CRYSTAL TEARS, I BEGIN COVERING THE LITTLE MOUTH WITH KISSES.

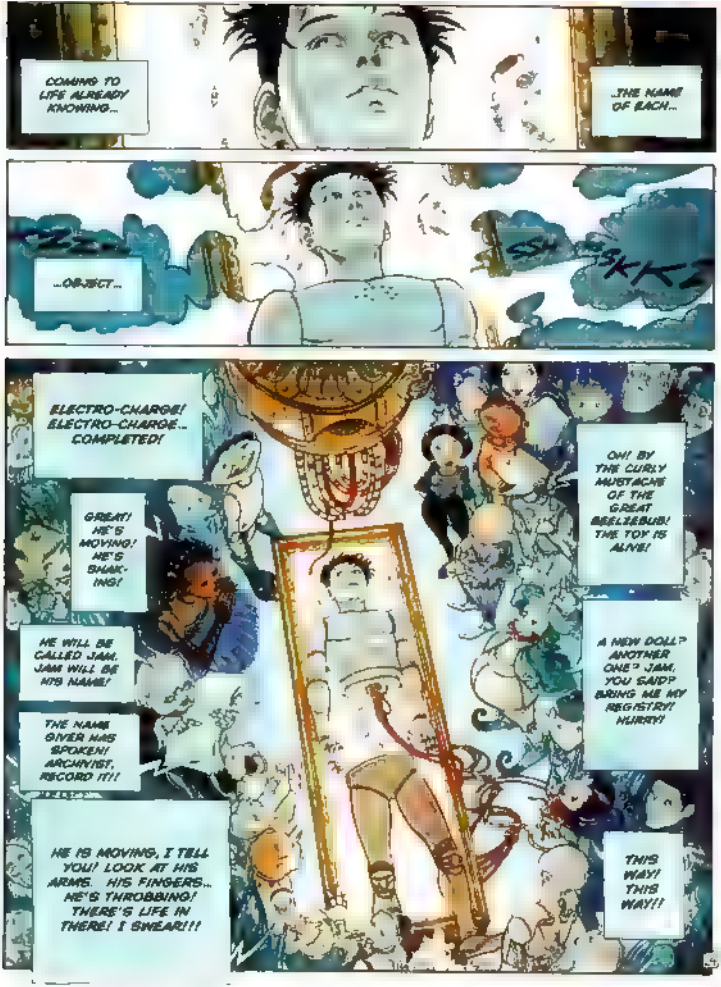
AND GRADUALLY I START TO THINK ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF MY TALE. THE STORY OF MY BIRTH... MY DISCOVERY OF THE ROBOT-FAIRY... AND THE EVENTS THAT LED TO OUR SEPARATION..

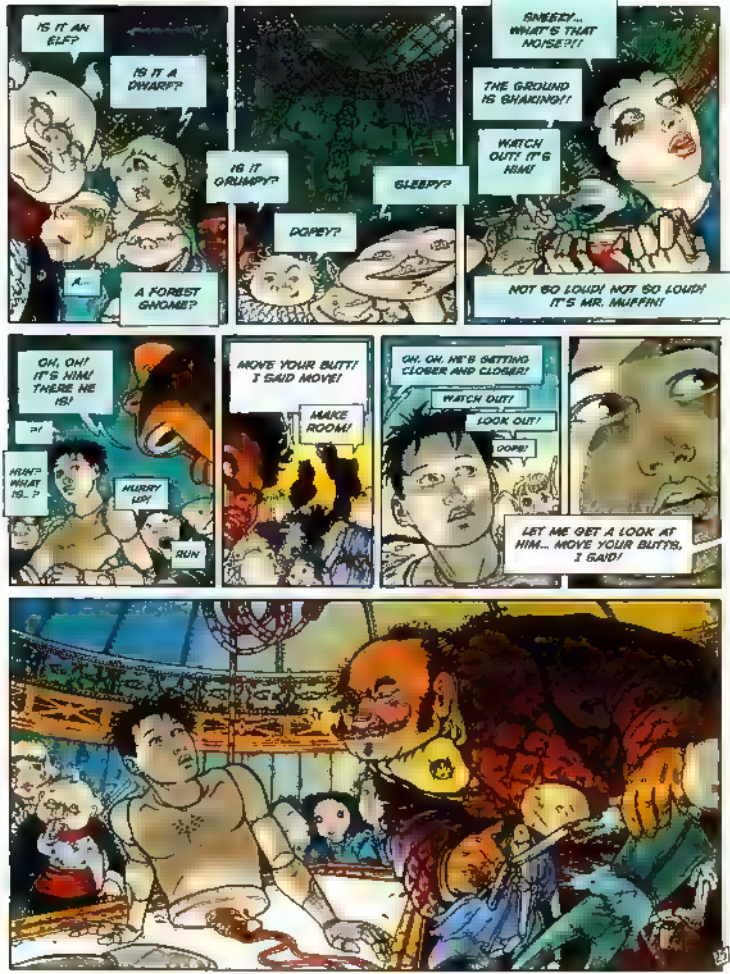
...AND THE FALL OF THE ANCIENT ERA...

THE STARS...
THE STARS... HIGH ABOVE...
TINY SHINING SOULS SUSPENDED... HIGH ABOVE...

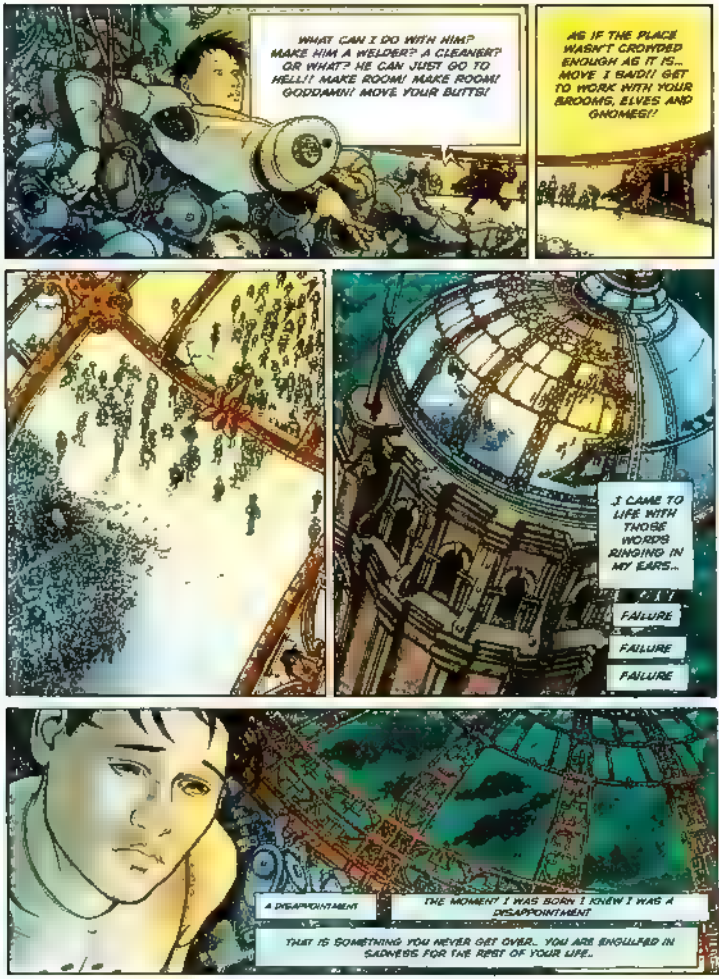

LITTLE DIAMOND EYES
UNBREAKABLE KERNELS OF NIGHT..
THERE'S THE CONSTELLATION OF THE CENTAUR..

AND THERE, A BIT HIGHER UP...
...THE TROPIC OF CAPRICORN...
A STRANGE FEELING...


COMING TO LIFE ALREADY KNOWING...
...THE NAME OF EACH...
...OBJECT...
SSH
SKKZ
ELECTRO-CHARGE! ELECTRO-CHARGE... COMPLETED!
GREAT! HE'S MOVING! HE'S SHAK-ING!
HE WILL BE CALLED JAM. JAM WILL BE HIS NAME!
THE NAME GIVER HAS SPOKEN! ARCHIVIST, RECORD IT!!!
HE IS MOVING, I TELL YOU! LOOK AT HIS ARMS. HIS FINGERS... HE'S THROBBING! THERE'S LIFE IN THERE! I SWEAR!!!
OH! BY THE CURLY MUSTACHE OF THE GREAT BEELZEBUB! THE TOY IS ALIVE!
A NEW DOLL? ANOTHER ONE? JAM, YOU SAID? BRING ME MY REGISTRY! HURRY!
THIS WAY! THIS WAY!!


IS IT AN ELF?
IS IT A DWARF?
A...
A FOREST GNOME?
IS IT GRUMPY?
DOPEY?
SLEEPY?
SNEEZY... WHAT'S THAT NOISE?!?
THE GROUND IS SHAKING!!
WATCH OUT! IT'S HIM!
NOT SO LOUD! NOT SO LOUD! IT'S MR. MUFFIN!
OH, OH! IT'S HIM! THERE HE IS!
?!
HUH? WHAT IS...?
HURRY UP!
RUN
MOVE YOUR BUTT! I SAID MOVE!
MAKE ROOM!
OH, OH, HE'S GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER!
WATCH OUT!
LOOK OUT!
OOPS!
LET ME GET A LOOK AT HIM... MOVE YOUR BUTTS, I SAID!

HEY!
...FAIRY-EYES!
HE DOESN'T HAVE FAIRY EYES! THERE'S NO ENCHANTMENT IN THOSE EYES!!
A FAILURE! A FAILURE! A FAILURE!
GODDAMN!!!
KRASH
ANOTHER FAILURE! ANOTHER UNFINISHED FAILURE!


WHAT CAN I DO WITH HIM? MAKE HIM A WELDER? A CLEANER? OR WHAT? HE CAN JUST GO TO HELL!! MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! GODDAMN! MOVE YOUR BUTTS!
AS IF THE PLACE WASN'T CROWDED ENOUGH AS IT IS... MOVE I SAID!! GET TO WORK WITH YOUR BROOMS, ELVES AND GNOMES!!
I CAME TO LIFE WITH THOSE WORDS RINGING IN MY EARS...
FAILURE
FAILURE
FAILURE
A DISAPPOINTMENT
THE MOMENT I WAS BORN I KNEW I WAS A DISAPPOINTMENT
THAT IS SOMETHING YOU NEVER GET OVER.. YOU ARE ENGULFED IN SADNESS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE..

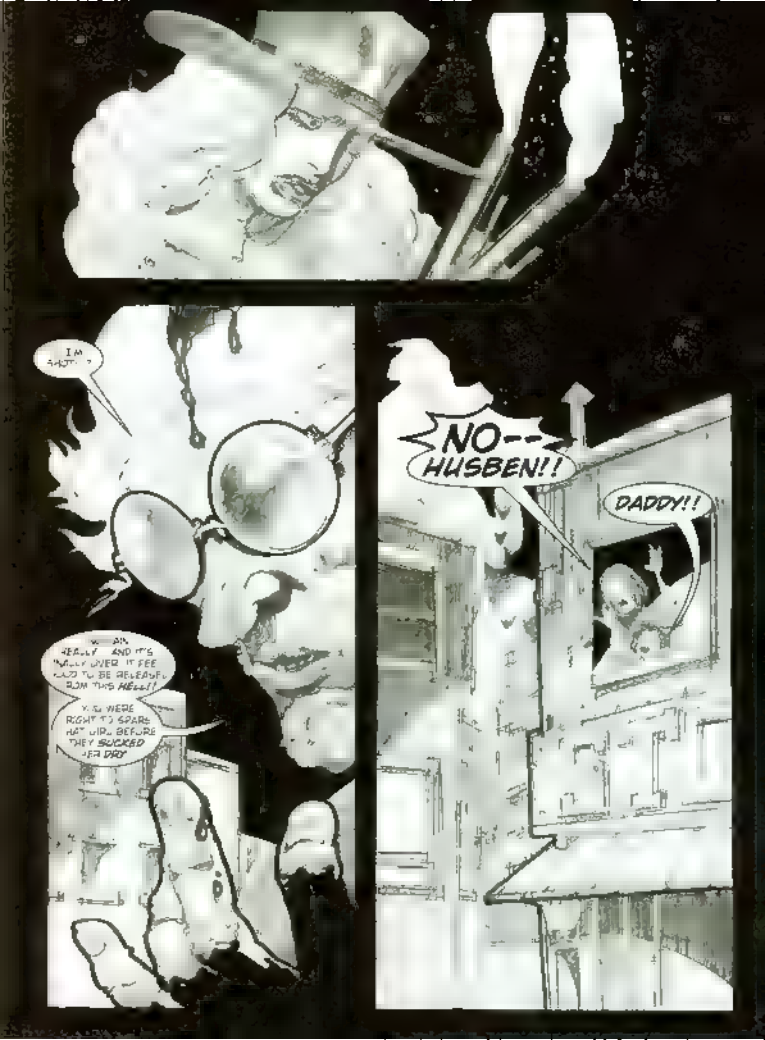
CONTINUED ON PAGE 108

HEY, HEY, HEY, YOU STUPID VAMPIRES-- WE GET A FIFTY PERCENT SHARE, REMEMBER?!
AW MAN!
YUM!
GULP!

NO!!
GRIPP
MUNCH
HEH! HEH! HEH!
NO! I HAVEN'T SEEN PARIS!
BLAM!
SHIT!! NO! YOU CAN'T!!
HEH HEH HEH
SO NEW YORK!
HA!!
I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A DECENT ORGASM!!

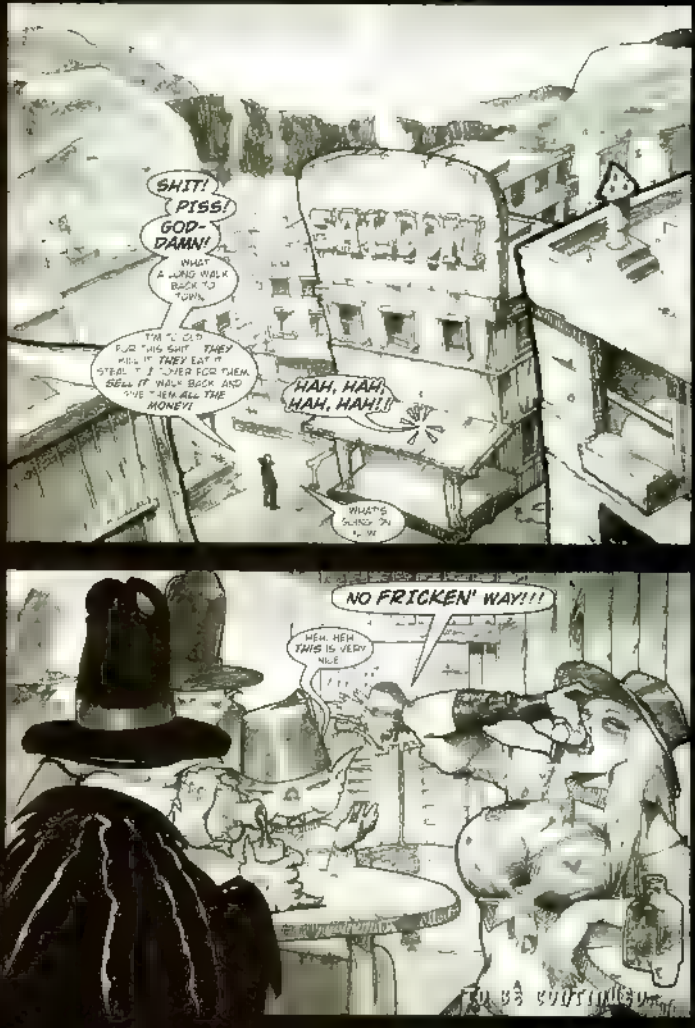
I'VE GOT SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR
OWW!!
SPAK!
UNGH!!
DAMN ALL TO HELL TO HELL DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG THIS HAS TAKE TO HEAL?!
CHRIST
NO
TO EARLY
WON!

OH PLEASE
THIS WHOLE SCENE
SHUT UP!!
HOW COULD I STAY WITH HE AS LONG AS I DID? I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS SHIT!!
AW- S- HOW FOR
SPUK!
BLAM!!
HEY!
I'VE GOT TOO MUCH AT STAKE!
STOMP
BLAM!!


I AM SHOT!
NO--
HUSBEN!!
DADDY!!

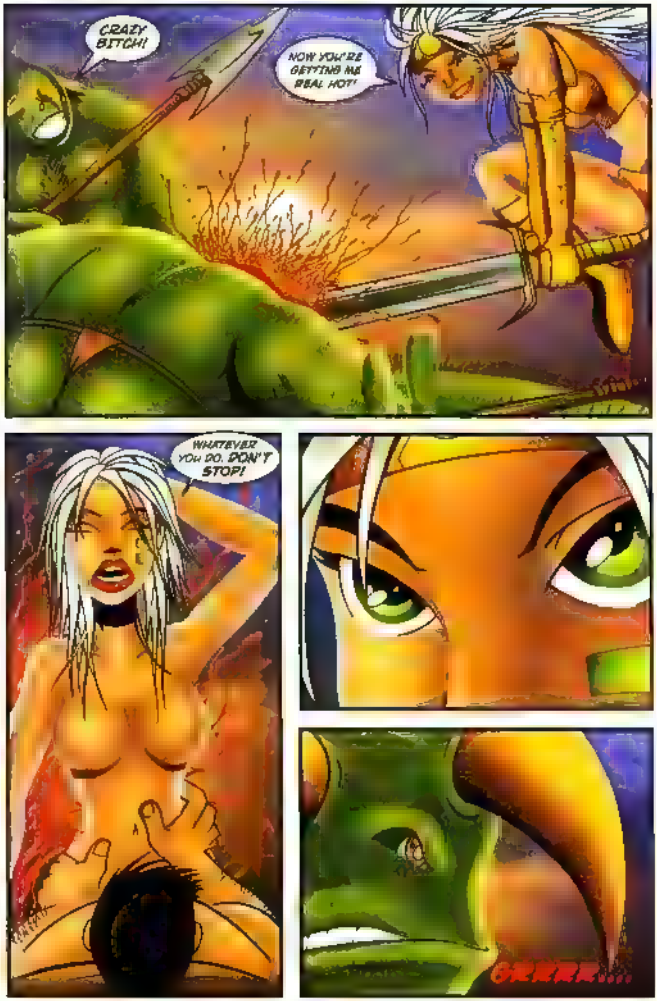
YOU STILL LIVE!
SOON KNOW
LOVE YOU
I'M STILL ALIVE!!
I'M STILL ALIVE?
GET IN HERE!
HYE
ESOD!?

Miles outside of town...
BONK! HONK!
LOOK [illegible] YOU'RE THINKING THIS IS COMPLETE [illegible]
[illegible] HAVE TO A THIS FOR MY FAMILY.
[illegible] I KNOW I KNOW
SURR
HEY [illegible] WERE JUST TRYING TO HELP AND I JUST WANT TO SAY [illegible]
SURRY TO SEE YOU LEAVE YOU GUY REAL HEART KID
BYE!


SHIT!
PISS!
GOD-DAMN!
WHAT A LONG WALK BACK TO TOWN.
I'M TOO OLD FOR THIS SHIT. THEY KILL IT, THEY EAT IT, STEAL IT, LIVE FOR THEM. SELL IT, WALK BACK AND GIVE THEM ALL THE MONEY!
HAH, HAH, HAH, HAH!!
WHAT'S GOING ON IN...
NO FRICKEN' WAY!!!
HEH, HEH. THIS IS VERY NICE

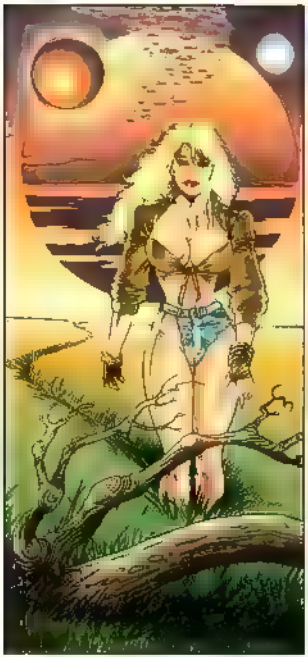
THE WET, HOT SUMMER AIR MAKES ME IRRITABLE. I NEED SOMETHING TO TAKE OUT MY AGGRESSIONS ON.
AHH YES, A FEW VOLUNTEERS.
THERE IS NOTHING BETTER THAN THE FEELING YOU GET AS YOU BEGIN FOR BATTLE. ALL MY SENSES SHARP AND READY TO STRIKE. I FEEL ALIVE AGAIN.
WILDFLOWER
LOVE & WAR
BY BILLY MARTINEZ & MOREY HOLLIHAN

ONLY TRUE THINKER COMPARES IT TO THE ART OF WAR
... LOVE !
THEY BOTH EXCITE ME VERY MUCH !
THE FOREPLAY WAS FUN, BOYS. NOW FOR THE GOOD STUFF!


CRAZY BITCH!
NOW YOU'RE GETTING ME REAL HOT!
WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T STOP!
GRRRR....

BOO!
LOVE AND WAR WELL MAYBE THEY ARE A BIT OVER RATED.
ME OUTTA HERE
YOU WHAT? YOU DID ALREADY! BUT I WAS JUST GETTING READY TO
SORRY BABY
YOU SELFISH BASTARD!
MEN, NO MATTER WHAT SPACIES THEY COME FROM, BOY CAN THEY BE A BIG DISAPPOINTMENT!

ALEIDA IN HELLMALL ARTIST H.M BAKER WRITER. M LODEWYK



HEEAAAAH! SWELL PUSSY!
YOU MEAN SALT?
I MEAN WE'RE GONNA HAVE US A BALL.
WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
YIP YIP YIP!!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE

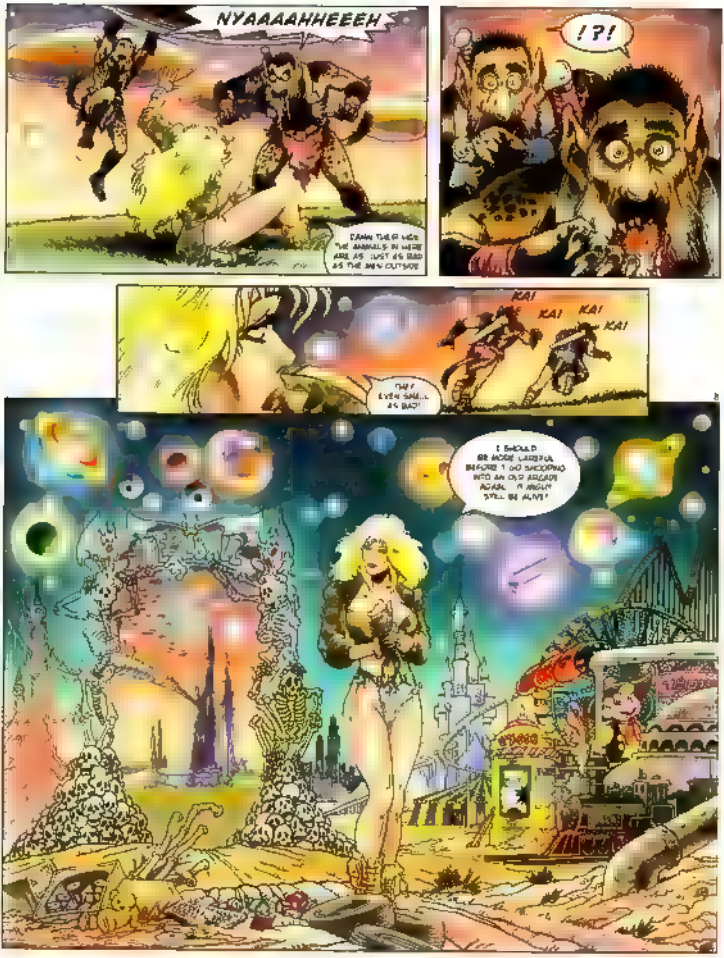
NOW I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN GET OUT
THANK GOD'S THE GRAVITY IS WEAK ENOUGH FOR ME TO MAKE JUMPS
LIKE THIS
YIPPPPY!!PP!! KAI!EEEE KAIKA!!

UP YOUR OWN BROWN SPOTS.
RAFF RAFFRAFF YIPYIPYIP
HAVE YOUR HEAD SHOT!
OOPS
THAT'S WHAT WE WANT HER FOR!

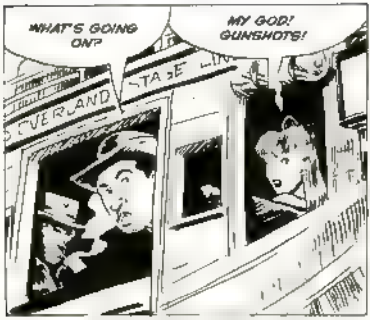
AAYEEEEH!
GRRRK!
AARGGHH!!
NOOOOO!
YEEEESSSSS!!
HEY, THAT'S NOT FAIR!
YOU GET ME SECOND TURN!
GET OFF ME, YOU FILTHY MONGRELS!!

SMACK
I'VE GOT JUST ONE CHANCE TO GET ON THE NEXT EVEL.
GOTCHA!!
STRAAP

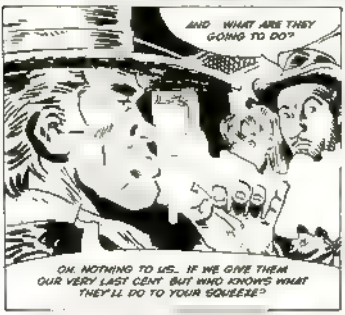
GET OUT OF THE WAY YOU'RE NOT HAVING MY...
...BRAINS AT HER.
WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON UP HERE?
AWWW, MOM, WE JUST NOTHING MOM.
WE'RE DOING NOTHIN' MRS. CASPER.
AHA! YOU WAIT YOUNG MAN, 'TIL YOUR DAD I CATCH YOU PLAYING WITH THE ANTIQUE FELLOWS LOS ANGELES LEGION" TRUE WELLMAN!


NYAAAAHHEEEH
DAMN, THEY WERE THE ANIMALS IN HERE ARE AS JUST AS BAD AS THE MEN OUTSIDE
!?!
KA!
KA!
KA!
KA!
THEY EVEN SMELL AS BAD!
I SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL BEFORE I GO SHOOTING INTO AN OLD ARCADE AGAIN. I MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE!

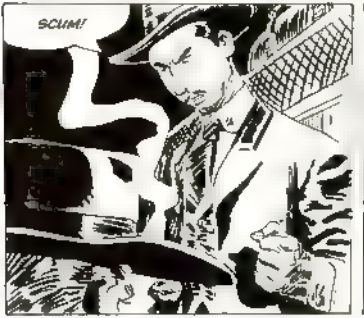
SNAKE:
THE STAGECOACH
MMMMM!
REALLY JOHNNY DEAR.. WE'RE NOT ALONE.
HOOO!
BANG
WE'RE NOT DISTURBING YOU IN ANY WAY ARE WE, SIR?
GO AHEAD ENJOY YOURSELVES.


WHAT'S GOING ON?
MY GOD! GUNSHOTS!

NO BIG DEAL · JUST SOME HIGHWAYMEN ATTACKING THE STAGECOACH.
HEAVENS!


AND WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO?
OH, NOTHING TO US.. IF WE GIVE THEM OUR VERY LAST CENT. BUT WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'LL DO TO YOUR SQUEEZE?

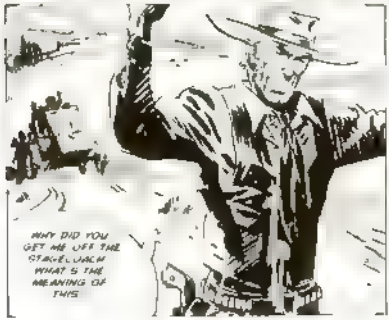
THEY'LL PROBABLY HURT HER!
JOHNNY!
BUT DON'T WORRY WITH A BIT OF LUCK THEY'LL LET US WATCH AND WE'LL GET TO ENJOY THE SHOW.


SCUM!

COME ON! EVERYONE OUTTA HERE

FINE. NOW LADIES AND GENTLEMEN YOU CAN CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY. SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE
??
??
??

NOT YOU! YOU'RE STAYING!
WHAT?
AND PUT YOUR HANDS UP!


WHY DID YOU GET ME OFF THE STAGECOACH? WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS

OLD FRIEND. HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN FAMLMO?
OOPS!

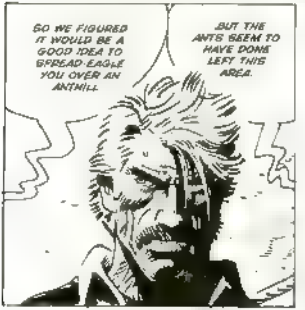
SURPRISED?
A BIT. I MUST ADMIT...
IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'LL RELIEVE YOU OF THIS...
HELP YOURSELF..
I HEAR YOU'RE VERY FAST, GRINGO..
GIVE ME MY COLT AND YOU'LL SEE..
YOU MISUNDERSTOOD, AMIGO.. THEY SAY YOU'RE VERY FAST ON YOUR FEET!
NOW, YOU CAN START RUNNING, GRINGO.. YOUR FUCKIN' LIFE DEPENDS ON HOW FAST YOUR DAMN LEGS CAN MOVE..
4

LET'S GO, PARTNER!
YEEAAH!
YIPEEE!
YAAAH!
HURRAAAY!
HA HA HA!

UGH!
SHIT!
HA HA HA!
HO HO HO!
HEE HEE HEE!
HO HO HO!
I GUESS YOU WON'T BE NEEDIN' THAT ANYMORE!
SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR TO KILL ME?
YOU MUST LEARN TO BE PATIENT
WE'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR THIS MOMENT FOR AGES GRINGO...

FIRST WE THOUGHT OF FILLIN' YOU FULL OF LEAD.
..BUT YOU DESERVE BETTER THAN THAT

SO THEN WE THOUGHT OF TYIN' YOU TO A CACTUS..
...BUT THERE AREN'T THAT MANY OF 'EM ROUND HERE

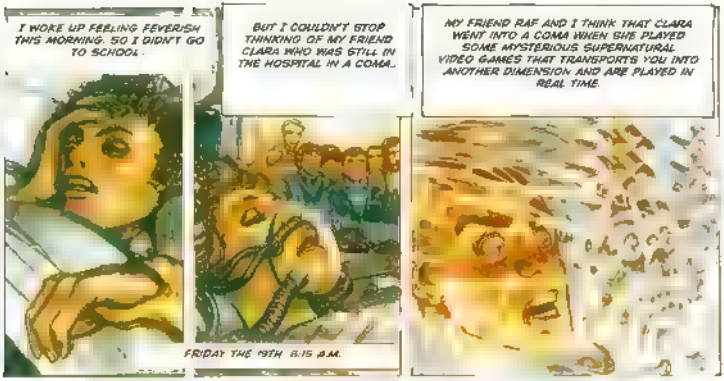

SO WE FIGURED IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO SPREAD-EAGLE YOU OVER AN ANTHILL
..BUT THE ANTS SEEM TO HAVE DONE LEFT THIS AREA.

FINALLY WE DECIDED TO HOG-TIE YOU UNDER THE HOT SUN TILL YOU FRY..
...BUT IT'S BEEN OVERCAST FOR DAYS.

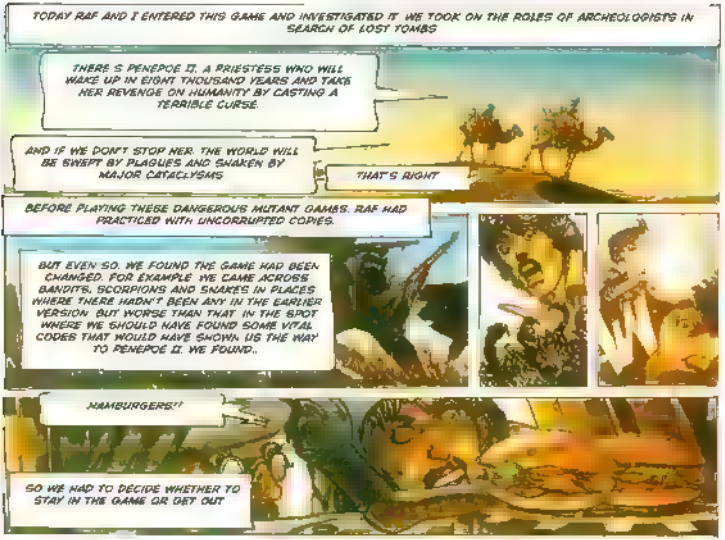
AS A LAST RESORT WE DECIDED TO.
DICE YOU UP, AMIGO..
GULP!

TIME TO GET STARTED!
YOU BET, PANCHO!
NOOOOO!

ZACK
?!
ZACK
AT FIRST WE WERE REAL MAD AT YOU, AMIGO.. FOR MAKIN' MY COMPADRE FUCK ME IN THE SALOON IN FRONT OF EVERYONE, REALLY! BUT THEN WE FIGURED YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR MEETING.. RIGHT, BUDDY?
EXACTLY PANCHITO
YOUR PUNISHMENT IS TO WALK THE TWENTY MILES TO ROSARITO
AND YOU'LL FIND THIS NEXT TO THE NEAREST CACTUS.. OKAY?
AND SO.. VAYA CON DIOS, AMIGO!
GO FUCK YOURSELVES!

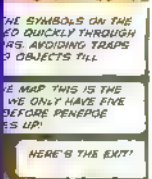

I WOKE UP FEELING FEVERISH THIS MORNING. SO I DIDN'T GO TO SCHOOL.
BUT I COULDN'T STOP THINKING OF MY FRIEND CLARA WHO WAS STILL IN THE HOSPITAL IN A COMA..
MY FRIEND RAF AND I THINK THAT CLARA WENT INTO A COMA WHEN SHE PLAYED SOME MYSTERIOUS SUPERNATURAL VIDEO GAMES THAT TRANSPORTS YOU INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION AND ARE PLAYED IN REAL TIME.
FRIDAY THE 19TH 8:15 A.M.

CHOOSE YOUR GAME... (THE LOST TOMB, PART II)


TODAY RAF AND I ENTERED THIS GAME AND INVESTIGATED IT. WE TOOK ON THE ROLES OF ARCHEOLOGISTS IN SEARCH OF LOST TOMBS
THERE'S PENEPOE II, A PRIESTESS WHO WILL WAKE UP IN EIGHT THOUSAND YEARS AND TAKE HER REVENGE ON HUMANITY BY CASTING A TERRIBLE CURSE.
AND IF WE DON'T STOP HER, THE WORLD WILL BE SWEPT BY PLAGUES AND SHAKEN BY MAJOR CATACLYSMS
THAT'S RIGHT
BEFORE PLAYING THESE DANGEROUS MUTANT GAMES, RAF HAD PRACTICED WITH UNCORRUPTED COPIES.
BUT EVEN SO, WE FOUND THE GAME HAD BEEN CHANGED. FOR EXAMPLE, WE CAME ACROSS BANDITS, SCORPIONS AND SNAKES IN PLACES WHERE THERE HADN'T BEEN ANY IN THE EARLIER VERSION. BUT WORSE THAN THAT, IN THE SPOT WHERE WE SHOULD HAVE FOUND SOME VITAL CODES THAT WOULD HAVE SHOWN US THE WAY TO PENEPOE II, WE FOUND..
HAMBURGERS!!
SO WE HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER TO STAY IN THE GAME OR GET OUT

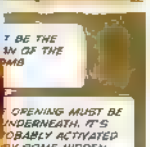
WE NOW HAVE A 95% CHANCE OF LOSING. SHOULD WE QUIT OR CARRY ON?
LET'S CARRY ON A BIT LONGER IF IT GETS TOO DIFFICULT WE CAN ALWAYS ESCAPE. OPEN THE GATE
OKAY
CLUMP
NOTHING HAPPENED TRY AGAIN
WAIT! THE GROUND! LOOK!
IT'S SINKING!
AAAAH!
AS SOON AS I FELL INTO THE TOMB'S DIMLY LIT PASSAGEWAY I FELT SORRY THAT I HAD DECIDED TO CARRY ON PLAYING
WE DON'T HAVE A MAP. BUT I REMEMBER THERE'S A CLUE IN THIS SECTION OF THE GAME THAT INDICATES WHERE THE HAMBURGERS SHOULD HAVE BEEN HIDDEN
LET ME GET THE FLASH LIGHT
YES. THERE'S THE FIRST OBJECT. WHEN WE HAVE THE WHOLE SCROLL WE'LL SEE THAT THIS IS THE FIRST SYMBOL ON IT. WE MUST MEMORIZE IT
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

ON ITS OWN, NOTHING. BUT WHEN WE HAVE ALL OF THE SYMBOLS I THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO DECIPHER THE MESSAGE..
WHAT'S THAT?
AND SO RECALL THE CURSE PENEPOE II WILL FINALLY BE ABLE TO REST AND BE AT PEACE WITH HERSELF AND HUMANKIND..
AND WE SHOULD GET SOME REST TOO.
IN THE NICK OF TIME, I MANAGED TO SAVE RAF FROM BEING SQUASHED BY THE GIANT FIST
SHIT! I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE GIANT FIST THANKS, FITO!
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT THE FIST WAS IN THE ORIGINAL GAME?
YES. AND IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HOLDING THE HAMBURGERS. LET'S SEE WHAT IT'S HOLDING NOW.
I CAN KEEP THIS GIANT DIAMOND, CAN'T I?
SURE. KEEP EVERYTHING YOU FIND. HEY! WHAT'S THAT?


HE SYMBOLS ON THE
ED QUICKLY THROUGH
RS. AVOIDING TRAPS
OBJECTS TILL

E MAP THIS IS THE
WE ONLY HAVE FIVE
BEFORE PENEPOE
ES UP!

HERE'S THE EXIT!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N OF THE
MB

OPENING MUST BE
UNDERNEATH, IT'S
OBABLY ACTIVATED
BY SOME HIDDEN
MECHANISM

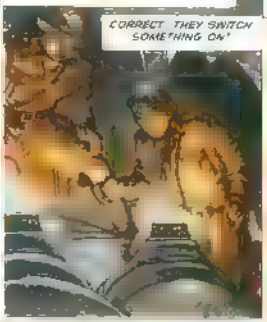
WE HAVE TO FIND IT
SO WE CAN GET
OUT!

THE SCROLL WITH THE CODES AND A STATUE!
NOW NO ONE CAN STOP US TILL THE END OF THE GAME!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF DECIPHERING THE SYMBOLS!
THE ARM ABOVE THIS WRIST IS HOLLOW! THIS IS THE WAY!
BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT!
WITH THE HELP OF THE SYMBOLS ON THE SCROLL, WE ADVANCED QUICKLY THROUGH THE MANY CORRIDORS, AVOIDING TRAPS AND COLLECTING OBJECTS TILL
ACCORDING TO THE MAP THIS IS THE FINAL LEVEL . BUT WE ONLY HAVE FIVE MINUTES LEFT BEFORE RENEPOE WAKES UP!
HERE'S THE EXIT!
WOW. A GIANT METAL SPHINX!
IT MUST BE THE GUARDIAN OF THE TOMB.
THE OPENING MUST BE UNDERNEATH. IT'S PROBABLY ACTIVATED BY SOME HIDDEN MECHANISM
WE HAVE TO FIND IT SO WE CAN GET OUT!

SOMETHING IS MISSING FROM THE RINGS ON ITS CLAW!

SOMETHING THAT WE'VE BEEN COLLECTING ON OUR WAY! THE DIAMONDS! LET'S STICK THEM ON!

THEY LIT UP, ONE BY ONE! AND WHEN WE GOT TO THE LAST ONE



CORRECT. THEY SWITCH SOMETHING ON!

A HOT DAMP WIND WAS BLOWING ON OUR NECKS AND THE GROUND STARTED TO SHAKE.

THE BREEZE WAS THE SPHINX'S BAD BREATH. IT WAS HUNGRY A GOOD YEARS OF HUNGER

WHAT SHOULD WE DO, RAF? THE ONLY WAY OUT IS TO KILL THE SPHINX. BUT WE WON'T GET FAR WITH THESE WEAPONS

LET'S SEPARATE AT LEAST THAT WILL MAKE THINGS A BIT HARDER FOR IT!
RAF WAS RIGHT! THE SPHINX BECAME CONFUSED AND DIDN'T KNOW WHICH ONE OF US TO ATTACK
LUCKY ME HE PICKED ME.. AND THE ONLY WEAPON I HAD WAS THIS RIDICULOUS GUN. I RUMMAGED IN MY BACKPACK AND..
HOLD IT!
THE ONLY THING IN THERE WAS A SQUASHED HAMBURGER
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? THROW IT
I HAD NOTHING TO LOSE. PANIC WAS MAKING ME SAY DUMB THINGS..
HERE YOU GO! ONE CHEESEBURGER NO RELISH!

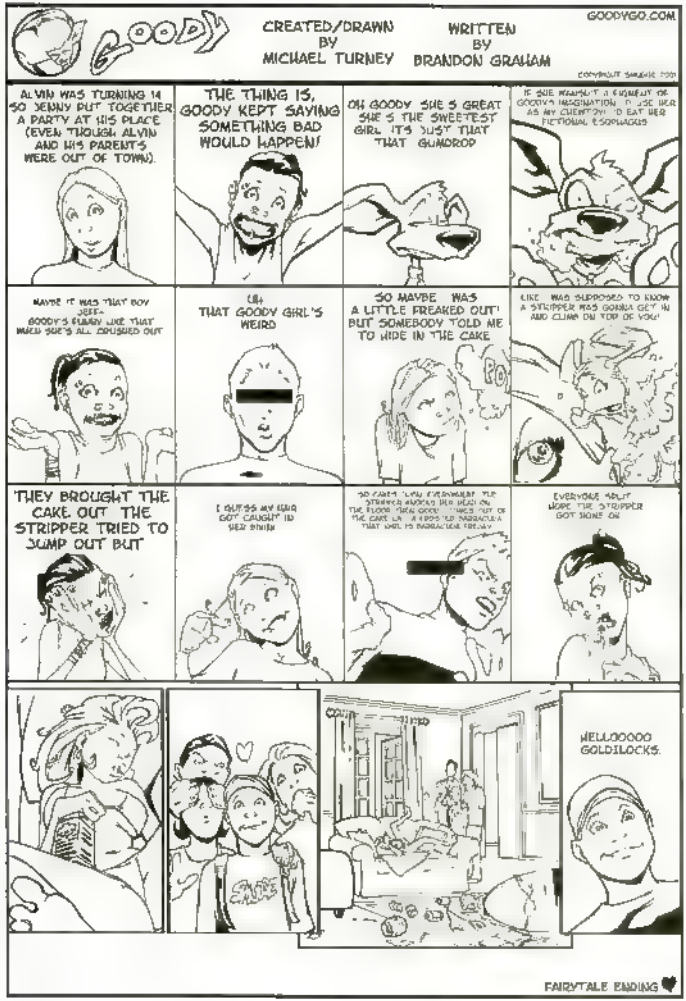
TOTAL AND IMMEDIATE INDIGESTION!
GET OUT OF THE WAY, FITO!
THE EFFECTS OF THE HAMBURGER WERE FATAL.. AND THE SPHINX EXPLODED INTO MILLIONS OF JEWELS AND GOLD BARS.
IT ALL CAME DOWN AROUND ME AND MADE THE FLOOR COLLAPSE.
HELP! RAF!
FITO!
AAAH
FITO? ARE YOU STILL ALIVE?

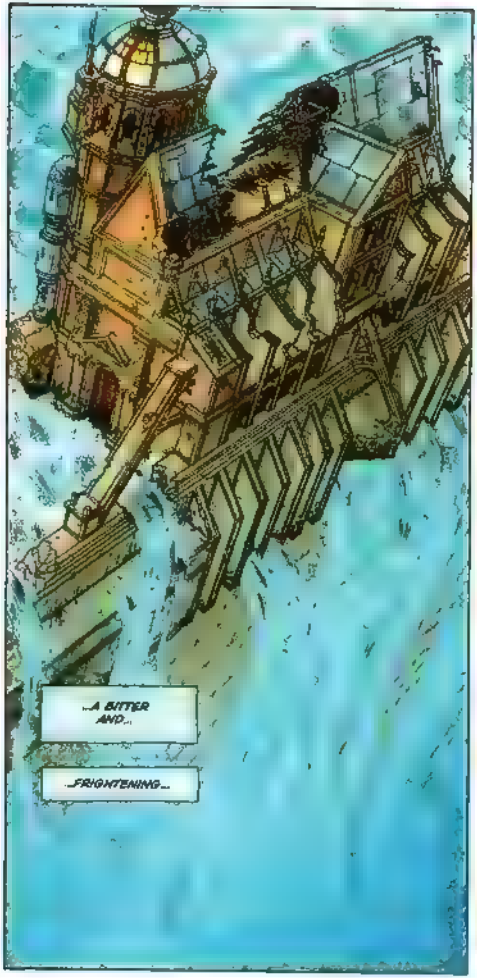
TALK TO ME!
DO YOU HAVE ANY ASPIRIN?
THE SPHINX ISN'T ONLY THE GUARDIAN OF THE TOMB. IT IS ALSO PENEPOE II'S TREASURE... A HUGE FORTUNE UNDER WHICH I AM BURIED...
I'VE LOST MY WATCH BUT I DON'T NEED IT TO SEE THAT I AM DYING.
SHUT UP!
I HAVE TO ABORT THE GAME! BUT WHERE'S MY WATCH? I'VE LOST MINE TOO!
NO. YOU HAVEN'T LOST IT!
IT WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU AS PART OF ONE OF THE GAME'S MUTATIONS.

SO THE ONLY WAY OF SAVING YOU IS TO FINISH THE GAME. LET'S SEE.. I'VE GOT THE SCROLL WITH THE CODES...
IF WE FOLLOW THE ORDER OF YOUR MARKINGS, WE WILL FIND THE RIDDLE THAT WILL ENABLE US TO RECALL THE CURSE
"DRIVES AWAY."
RIGHT! "DRIVES AWAY DEATH."
"DRIVES AWAY ETERNAL DEATH. MAKES LIFE FIND ITS ESSENCE..."
GREAT FITO. YOU'RE A GENIUS WITH RIDDLES! BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
WE'RE MISSING THE LAST SYMBOL. I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT! WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF LIFE? THE SYMBOL MUST BE NEAR HERE BUT WHERE? THERE'S NO TIME LEFT!
FITO, YOU HAVE TO FIND IT! HERE ARE TWO MORE DRAWINGS.. THEY LOOK LIKE MELONS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT
THE ESSENCE.. NO, THEY AREN'T MELONS STUPID! THEY'RE WOMEN'S BREASTS A MOTHER'S BREASTS
A MOTHER'S BREASTS? WHERE AM I GONNA FIND SOME TITS NOW?
PENEPOE IT

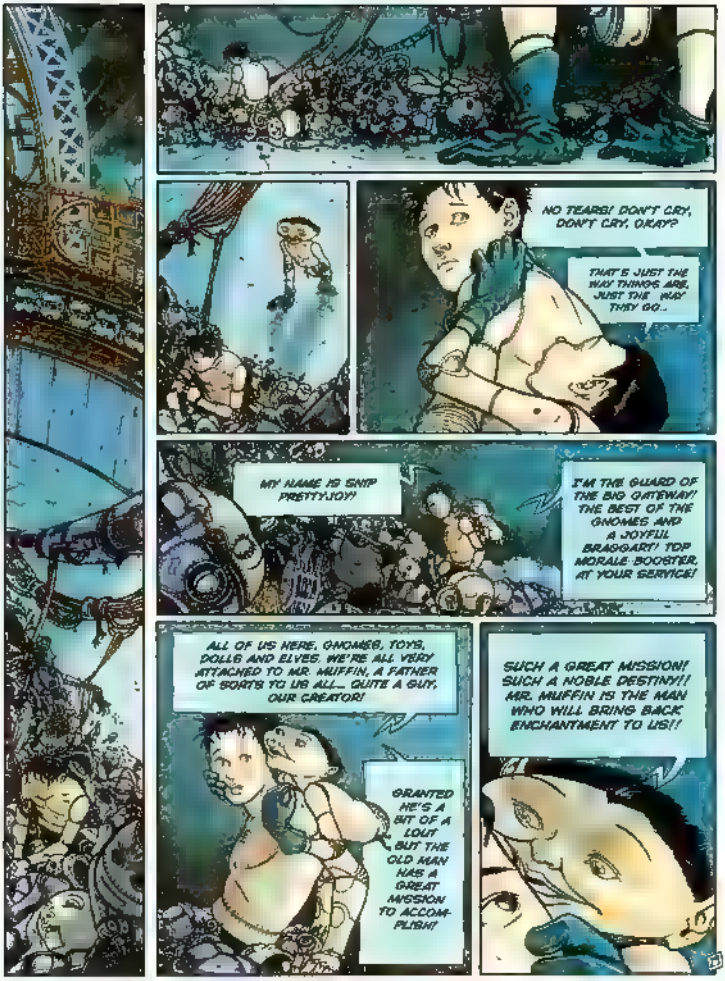
ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE A GENIUS, FITO! THAT'S THE ESSENCE OF LIFE.
AND HERE'S LIFE A NEWBORN BABY..
PENEPOE II WILL WAKE UP SOON IF THE BABY IS NOT AT HER BREAST. SHE'LL RELEASE THE CURSE! DRIVES AWAY ETERNAL DEATH. IT'S AS CLEAR AS SPRING WATER!
ALTHOUGH I WAS DYING, I WATCHED AS RAF CLIMBED UP TO THE ATRIUM LIKE SOME OLYMPIC RECORD HOLDER. HE WAS SHOUTING MADLY
JUST A MINUTE, PENEPOE. HERE I AM WITH THE CHILD. AFTER 8,000 YEARS, YOU COULD HAVE HAD ANOTHER ONE RIGHT?
PENEPOE II IS WAKING UP TO ACCOMPLISH HER PURPOSE. HER COLOR IS CHANGING
AT THE VERY LAST SECOND, RAF PUT THE LITTLE STATUE IN IT'S PLACE.

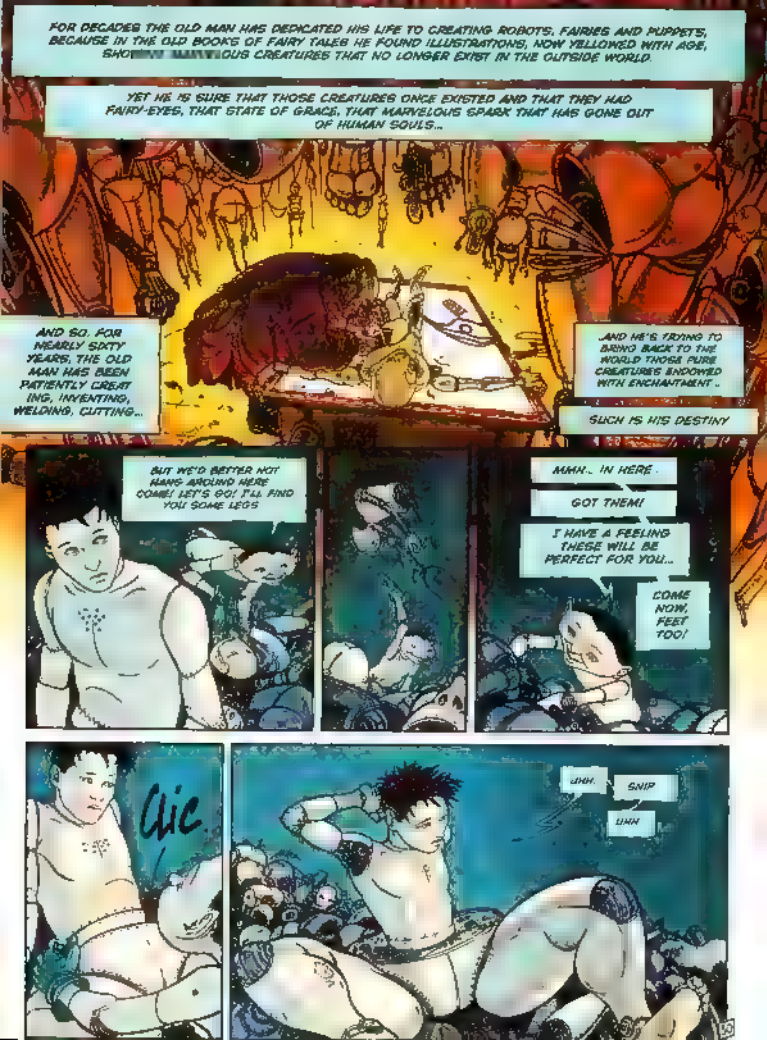
PENEPOE IT'S MASK SHATTERED AND SHE RECOVERED HER PEACEFUL SMILE. THE CURSE WAS BROKEN
WE WON, FITO! WE WON! WE SAVED OURSELVES AND WE FREED HUMANITY FROM THE CURSE.
HUMANITY WON, RAF WON BUT I LOST. I WAS LOSING MY LIFE... MY REAL LIFE AND MY VIRTUAL LIFE...
AND SINCE I AM DEAD, JUST LIKE CLARA I GUESS THE END OF THE STORY WILL BE TOLD BY RAF. 'CAUSE I WON'T BE ABLE TO CARRY ON
FITOOO! FITOO!!
FITO! WHAT'S THE MATTER? FITO, TALK TO ME! WAKE UP!
MY MOTHER WAS RIGHT. SHE SAID VIDEO GAMES WOULD BE THE END OF ME.. SHE SAID...
SHIT FITO! DON'T DO THIS TO ME!
BUT I'M HAPPY: THERE WILL BE NO MORE MATH OR HISTORY. NO MORE FIGHTS WITH MY SISTER. I'M JUST SORRY THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO PLAY EROTIC TETRIS GAMES BEFORE FALLING ASLEEP.

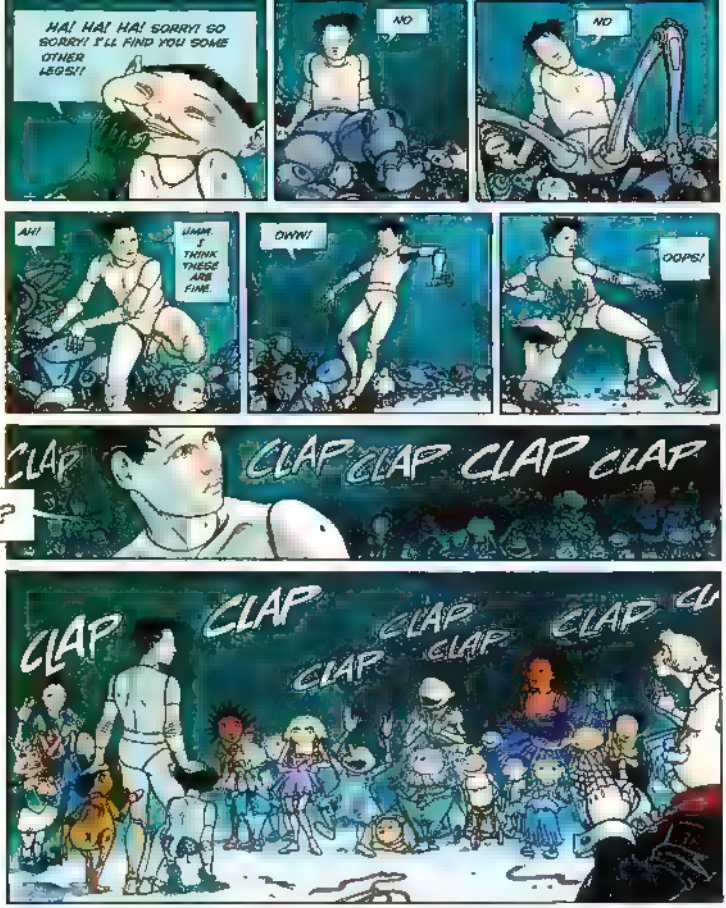

GOODY
CREATED/DRAWN BY MICHAEL TURNEY
WRITTEN BY BRANDON GRAHAM
GOODYGO.COM
COPYRIGHT SUNSHINE 2001
ALVIN WAS TURNING 14 SO JENNY PUT TOGETHER A PARTY AT HIS PLACE (EVEN THOUGH ALVIN AND HIS PARENTS WERE OUT OF TOWN).
THE THING IS, GOODY KEPT SAYING SOMETHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN!
OH GOODY SHE'S GREAT SHE'S THE SWEETEST GIRL IT'S JUST THAT THAT GUMDROP
IF SHE WASN'T A FIGMENT OF GOODY'S IMAGINATION I'D USE HER AS MY CLIENT ON D EAT HER FICTIONAL ESOPHAGUS
MAYBE IT WAS THAT BOY JEFF. GOODY'S FUNNY LIKE THAT WHEN SHE'S ALL CRUSHED OUT
UH THAT GOODY GIRL'S WEIRD
SO MAYBE WAS A LITTLE FREAKED OUT BUT SOMEBODY TOLD ME TO HIDE IN THE CAKE
LIKE WAS SUPPOSED TO KNOW A STRIPPER WAS GONNA GET IN AND CLIMB ON TOP OF YOU!
THEY BROUGHT THE CAKE OUT THE STRIPPER TRIED TO JUMP OUT BUT
I GUESS MY HAIR GOT CAUGHT IN SHEER SPANDEX
SO I DIDN'T SEE EVERYBODY ELSE STRANGER MUCKED THEIR HEAD ON THE FLOOR THEN GOODY CAME OUT OF THE CAKE LIK A HIPPO TO MASSACRE A THAT WAS SO MASSACRE FREAKY
EVERYONE SPLIT MORE THE STRIPPER GOT SHOT ON
HELLOOOOO GOLDILOCKS.
FAIRYTALE ENDING


...A BITTER AND...
...FRIGHTENING...

SADNESS...

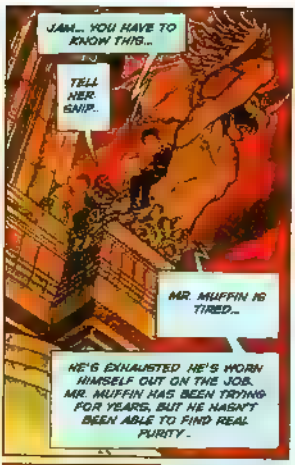

NO TEARS! DON'T CRY, DON'T CRY, OKAY?
THAT'S JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE, JUST THE WAY THEY GO..
MY NAME IS SNIP PRETTYJOY!
I'M THE GUARD OF THE BIG GATEWAY! THE BEST OF THE GNOMES AND A JOYFUL BRAGGART! TOP MORALE BOOSTER, AT YOUR SERVICE!
ALL OF US HERE, GNOMES, TOYS, DOLLS AND ELVES, WE'RE ALL VERY ATTACHED TO MR. MUFFIN, A FATHER OF SORTS TO US ALL... QUITE A GUY, OUR CREATOR!
GRANTED HE'S A BIT OF A LOUT BUT THE OLD MAN HAS A GREAT MISSION TO ACCOMPLISH!
SUCH A GREAT MISSION! SUCH A NOBLE DESTINY!! MR. MUFFIN IS THE MAN WHO WILL BRING BACK ENCHANTMENT TO US!!

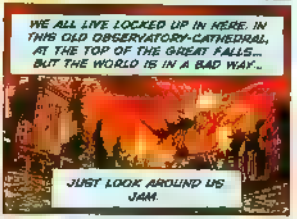

FOR DECADES THE OLD MAN HAS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO CREATING ROBOTS, FAIRIES AND PUPPETS, BECAUSE IN THE OLD BOOKS OF FAIRY TALES HE FOUND ILLUSTRATIONS, NOW YELLOWED WITH AGE, SHOWING MARVELOUS CREATURES THAT NO LONGER EXIST IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
YET HE IS SURE THAT THOSE CREATURES ONCE EXISTED AND THAT THEY HAD FAIRY-EYES, THAT STATE OF GRACE, THAT MARVELOUS SPARK THAT HAS GONE OUT OF HUMAN SOULS...
AND SO, FOR NEARLY SIXTY YEARS, THE OLD MAN HAS BEEN PATIENTLY CREATING, INVENTING, WELDING, CUTTING...
...AND HE'S TRYING TO BRING BACK TO THE WORLD THOSE PURE CREATURES ENDOWED WITH ENCHANTMENT..
SUCH IS HIS DESTINY
BUT WE'D BETTER NOT HANG AROUND HERE COME! LET'S GO! I'LL FIND YOU SOME LEGS
MMH.. IN HERE..
GOT THEM!
I HAVE A FEELING THESE WILL BE PERFECT FOR YOU...
COME NOW, FEET TOO!
Clic
UHH.
SNIP
UHH



THEY WERE ALL THERE... HUNDREDS, MAYBE EVEN THOUSANDS, OF TINY CREATURES. WORD HAD GOT AROUND, AND THEY SEEMED TO COME OUT OF EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY.. THEY CAME UP TO ME AND PINCHED ME, SMILING, GIGGLING OUT LOUD..

THEY ALL WELCOMED ME. AND HELPED ME BECAUSE I WAS A NEWCOMER. THEY TAUGHT ME HOW TO WALK, SHOWING ME HOW TO GO AROUND THE GREAT MEZZANINE.
SOME OF THEM TOOK ME TO THE HIGHEST EDGES OF THE WINDOW-RAMPARTS, TO SHOW ME THE MAIN AVENUES AND BOULEVARDS OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS...
CARLOTTA...
CARLOTTA AS IT WAS...
BEFORE THE ERA OF GRACE...


JAM... YOU HAVE TO KNOW THIS...
TELL HER SNIP.
MR. MUFFIN IS TIRED...
HE'S EXHAUSTED. HE'S WORN HIMSELF OUT ON THE JOB. MR. MUFFIN HAS BEEN TRYING FOR YEARS, BUT HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND REAL PURITY.


WE ALL LIVE LOCKED UP IN HERE, IN THIS OLD OBSERVATORY-CATHEDRAL, AT THE TOP OF THE GREAT FALLS... BUT THE WORLD IS IN A BAD WAY...
JUST LOOK AROUND US JAM.

YOU WHO HAVE NEW EYES, WHAT DO YOU SEE? ...THE SAME AS WE DO, RIGHT?

AREN'T YOU GOING TO SAY ANYTHING?
COME ON, FROM UP HERE FROM THIS DUSTY AND DECADENT PROMONTORY...
WHAT DO YOU SEE, JAM?
I... I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU CAN SEE, JAM. JAM-WITH-THE-NEW-EYES. JAM-ON-THE-VERGE-OF-TEARS.. YOU SEE STREETS... ON FIRE
...A WORLD THAT IS COMING TO AN END...
THAT IS OVER...
THAT IS IN AGONY...
SWOLLEN AND BLOATED.
A WORLD OF SUFFERING
ARMED GROUPS THAT ATTACK..
KILL AND PIL
LAGE
WHAT YOU SEE BEFORE YOU, YOUNG JAM, ARE HUMAN BEINGS.

..THE MOST SUICIDAL CREATURES THAT HAVE EVER EXISTED.
AS MR. MUFFIN HASN'T CEASED TELLING US!, "IF YOU EVER SEE A HUMAN BEING, RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN! AND DON'T HANG ABOUT!"

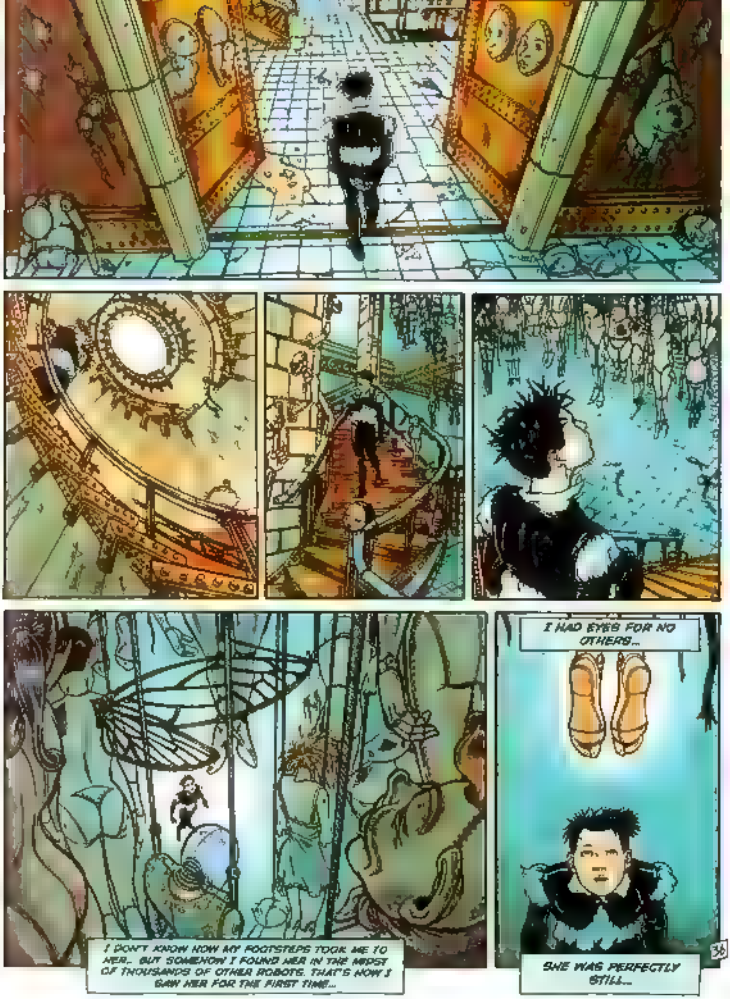
I.. I COULDN'T LOOK AWAY... I COULD HEAR QUIET STIFLED SOBBING... THEN ANOTHER SOUND COVERED IT "WHAT'S THAT NOISE... FROM ABOVE?" I ASKED SNIP. IT SEEMED... IT SEEMED TO BE A STRANGLED LAUGH... OR MAYBE A DESPERATE ENDLESS CRY. SNIP DIDN'T REPLY... INSTEAD, HE LAUGHED AT MY DEATHLY PALE FACE AND THEN LEFT

PICCHIONO...
THE FUNNY LITTLE MAN WHOSE NAME AND FACE APPEAR IN MANY STORYBOOKS. HIS NAME HAD BEEN WORKED OUT WITH THE HELP OF AN OLD BOOK COVER. THOUGH TORN AND YELLOWED WITH AGE IT HAD BEEN PATIENTLY AND SUCCESSFULLY PASTED TOGETHER.

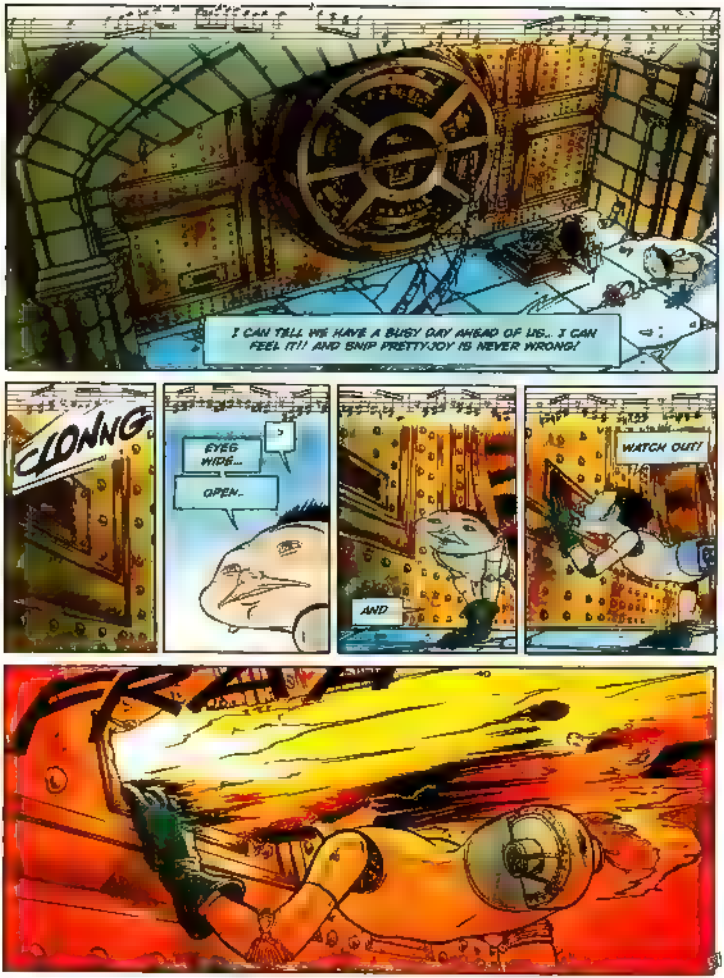
..MISTER MUFFIN! HE DIDN'T SHOW UP VERY OFTEN, 'CAUSE HE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TIME TO SPARE. HIS GOAL IN LIFE WAS TO FIND THE FAIRY-EYE! IT WAS HIS ONE AND ONLY GOAL!!!

THERE WAS TENSION IN THE AIR. AND EVERY DAY IT GOT WORSE.. MR. MUFFIN WAS IN MORE AND MORE OF A HURRY TO ACCOMPLISH HIS TASK.. BUT OUTSIDE THE HORDES OF HUMANS SEEMED TO HAVE CALMED DOWN... THEY SEEMED QUIETER. AT LEAST THEIR CRIES AND HOWLS NO LONGER REACHED US

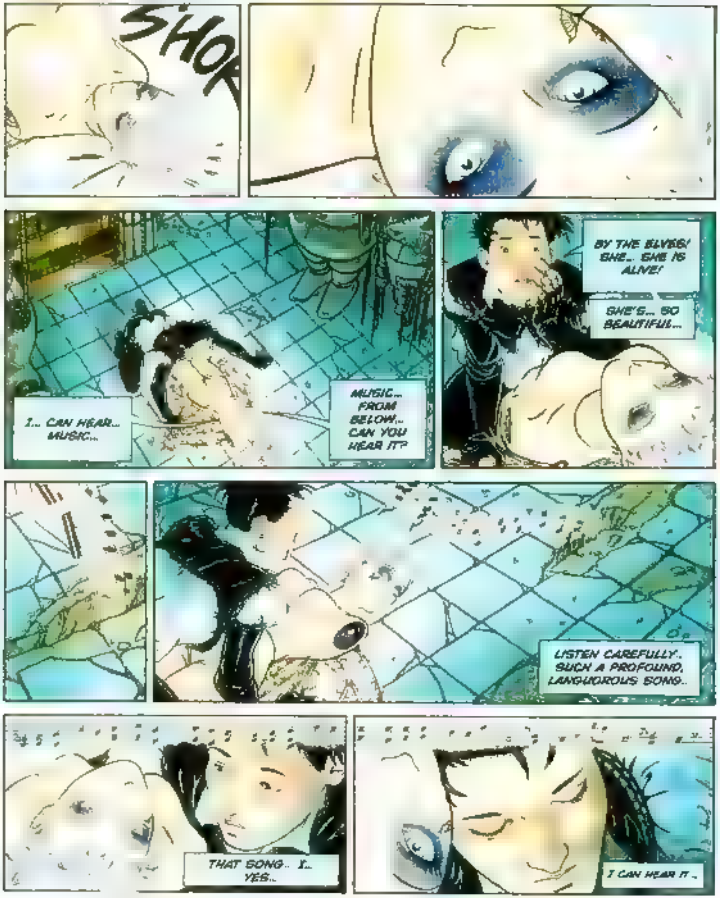
I'D ALREADY BEEN ALIVE FOR SIXTY DAYS... BUT NOTHING HAD HAPPENED YET..
BOREDOM..
PLAIN BOREDOM...
I WANDERED THROUGH CORRIDORS..
AND MORE BOREDOM.
I STILL REMEMBER VIVIDLY WHEN I


I DON'T KNOW HOW MY FOOTSTEPS TOOK ME TO HER... BUT SOMEHOW I FOUND HER IN THE MIDST OF THOUSANDS OF OTHER ROBOTS. THAT'S HOW I SAW HER FOR THE FIRST TIME...
I HAD EYES FOR NO OTHERS...
SHE WAS PERFECTLY STILL...
36

SHE WAS HANGING...
LIKE.
LIKE A.
LANTERN
A FAIRY
AS BEAUTIFUL AND SILENT AS A FORBIDDEN DREAM...
A LIFELESS FAIRY...
LOWER
YOU'RE ANNOYING ME, MR. GRAMOPHONE! LET ME KEEP WATCH IN PEACE!!
YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE THAT TUNE! UGH! I REALLY HATE IT!
IT'S MORBID! MACABRE! THAT SONG MAKES MY SCREWS GO COLD!

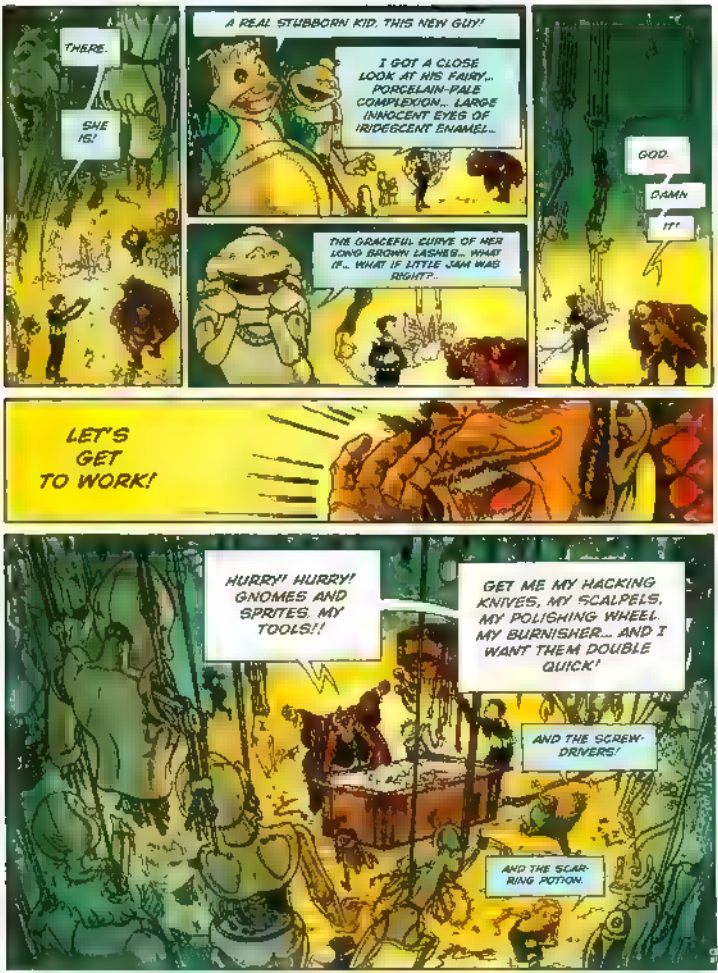

I CAN TELL WE HAVE A BUSY DAY AHEAD OF US.. I CAN FEEL IT!! AND SNIP PRETTYJOY IS NEVER WRONG!
CLONNG
EYES WIDE...
OPEN..
AND
WATCH OUT!!

AH AH AH, MR. MUFFIN!!
GRACE! I'VE FOUND IT! THE FAIRY-EYE!!..
THIS FAIRY HAS IT! I'M SURE!! THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN SEEKING IS HERE!!
IT'S HER.. I'VE FOUND..
POK
HER!

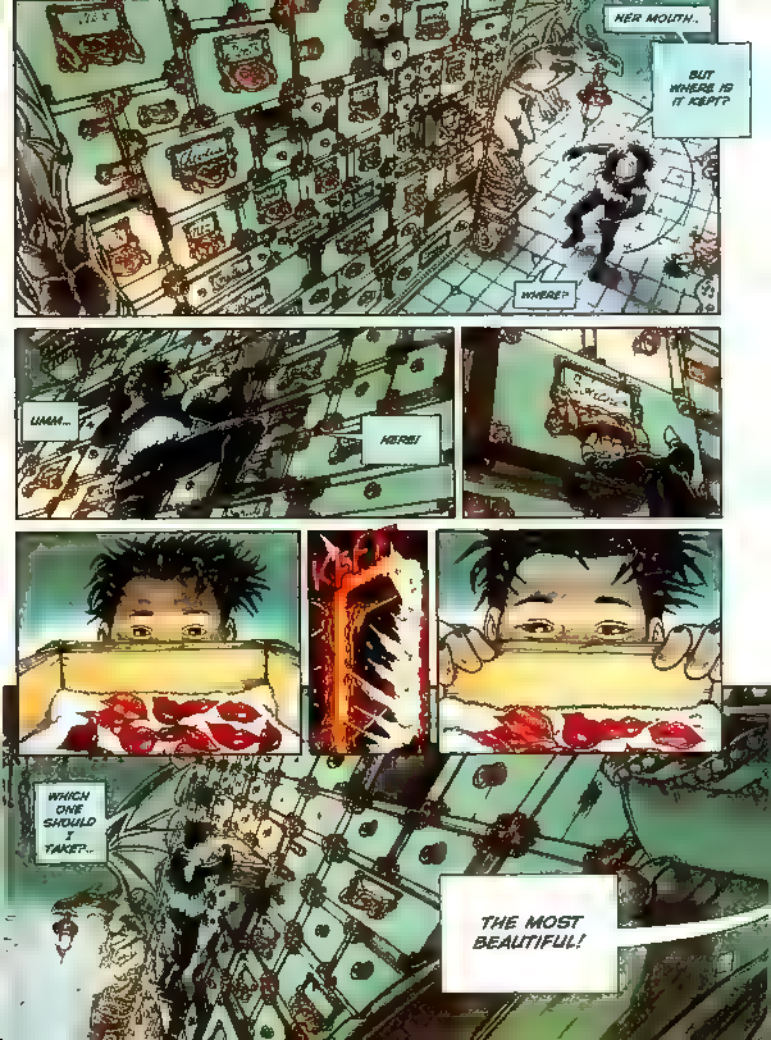

SHOK
I... CAN HEAR... MUSIC...
MUSIC... FROM BELOW... CAN YOU HEAR IT?
BY THE ELVES! SHE... SHE IS ALIVE!
SHE'S... SO BEAUTIFUL...
LISTEN CAREFULLY... SUCH A PROFOUND, LANGUOROUS SONG...
THAT SONG... I... YES...
I CAN HEAR IT...

FOR A MOMENT... MY HEAD NEXT TO HERS... THAT MELODY THAT ROSE UP TO US... SO BEAUTIFUL... I COULD HEAR IT TOO BUT ON MY OWN, I WOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED SO CAREFULLY MY DEAR FAIRY WERE YOU BREATHING SOME OF YOUR GRACE INTO ME? THAT MOMENT WOULD ECHO FOR A LONG TIME IN MY MIND... A UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL MOMENT... SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL...

FASTER! FASTER! HELP ME TO HACK DOWN THIS DOOR! MOVE YOUR [illegible] ENOUGH BEHIND THIS DOOR TO KEEP US GOING FOR A LONG TIME!!
HHHH
IT'S BEGINNING TO OPEN. BUT THE DAMN THING ISN'T MADE OF WOOD! IT'S SCALING OFF, AND UNDERNEATH IT'S ARMOR-PLATED! ... LOOK AT THIS!
I DON'T CARE HOW LONG IT TAKES TO OPEN! EVEN IF IT TAKES TWO DAYS, WE'LL GET IN THERE!
SOMEONE CALLED JAM WANTS TO TALK TO YOU! HE SAYS IT'S URGENT! HE WANTS TO COME AND SEE YOU AND HE INSISTS THAT...
NO, NO, NO!
THE FAIRY-EYE, MR. MUFFIN! [illegible] EYES!... SHE'S AN UNFINISHED ROBOT
HAVEN'T GOT THE TIME! GET OUTTA HERE!
SHE MUST BE FINISHED! COME AND SEE HER, I BEG OF YOU! YOU'LL RECOGNIZE THE FAIRY-EYES!
YOU'RE MAKING A TERRIBLE MISTAKE. PERHAPS BECAUSE YOU'RE DISTRACTED OR EXHAUSTED. BUT PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT HER! JUST FOR A SECOND!
I BEG YOU!
AND FINALLY, I CONVINCED HIM...


THERE.
SHE IS!
A REAL STUBBORN KID, THIS NEW GUY!
I GOT A CLOSE LOOK AT HIS FAIRY... PORCELAIN-PALE COMPLEXION... LARGE INNOCENT EYES OF IRIDESCENT ENAMEL...
THE GRACEFUL CURVE OF HER LONG BROWN LASHES... WHAT IF... WHAT IF LITTLE JAM WAS RIGHT?..
GOD
DAMN
IT!
LET'S GET TO WORK!
HURRY!! HURRY! GNOMES AND SPRITES, MY TOOLS!!
GET ME MY HACKING KNIVES, MY SCALPELS, MY POLISHING WHEEL, MY BURNISHER... AND I WANT THEM DOUBLE QUICK!
AND THE SCREW-DRIVERS!
AND THE SCARRING POTION.

SWRRRR
TR
CHEEK..
MICRO-SOLDERING
ARM...
NOSTRILS...
CAN I SEE? CAN I SEE?
NOT YET..
THE FINISHING TOUCH IS ALL THAT'S NEEDED NOW! HER LIPS! HER MOUTH, JAM!!
I'LL GET IT RIGHT AWAY!
RUN. JAM. RUN.. ALMOST FINISHED..
ALMOST.
FINISHED!...


HER MOUTH..
BUT WHERE IS IT KEPT?
WHERE?
UMM...
HERE!
WHICH ONE SHOULD I TAKE?..
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL!

THE DOOR HAS FINALLY COLLAPSED!!
WHO... WHO LET YOU...
INTRUDERS? HERE??
WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON...?
BE WARNED!
IN THE NAME OF MR. MUFFIN, I COMMAND YOU...
WOOF
HEAD FOR THE STAIRS! THE REST OF YOU, FOLLOW ME!
COVER ME!
HUMANS! HUMANS!!

MAKE THAT HYSTERICAL MIDGET SHUT UP... AND FOLLOW HIM! HURRY!! UP TO THE TOP!!
HUMANS... THEY'RE COMING FROM... EVERYWHERE!...
HELL! HELP! SAVE ME!
HOW!...
...DID THEY...
PEARL! NOOO! RUN! GET AWAY! HURRY, MY LOVELY!! THE HUMANS...
...ARE FOLLOWING ME!!
PEARL NO!
THIS WAY, THIS WAY, GUYS!
THE HUMANS, MR. MUFFIN! THEY'RE COMING! THEY'RE HERE!
KROO
BY THE GNOMES! THEY...
UGH!
HELL! OH NO!
THEY ARE HERE!
EVIL DAY, DARK STORM AND GREAT ANGER...
THEY...
THEY!

...HAVE INVADED!
MAKE HIM AND ALL THE OTHER WHINERS SHUT UP!... NOW, WE'RE THE MASTERS HERE!...

THE CATHEDRAL-FORTRESS BELONGS TO US NOW! GO ON THEN! KILL! PILLAGE! BURN! PLUNDER! AH AHH!!
LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED!